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MUCH ADOE ABOUT NOTHING,

WRITTEN BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

THE QUARTO EDITION,

1600.

A FACSIMILE

BY

CHARLES PRAETORIUS.

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

PETER AUGUSTIN DANIEL.

LONDON:

PRODUCED BY C. PRAETORIUS, 14 CLAREVILLE GROVE,
HEREFORD SQUARE, S.W.

1886.

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40 SHAKSPERE QUARTO FACSIMILES,

WITH INTRODUCTIONS, LINE-NUMBERS, &C, BY SHAKSPERE SCHOLARS,

ISSUED UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF DR F. J. FURNIVALL.

BURDACH

1. *Those by W. Griggs.*

No.

1. Hamlet. 1603.
2. Hamlet. 1604.
3. Midsummer Night's Dream. 1600. (Fisher.)
4. Midsummer Night's Dream. 1600. (Roberts.)
5. Loves Labor's Lost. 1598.
6. Merry Wives. 1602.
7. Merchant of Venice. 1600. (Roberts.)
8. Henry IV. 1st Part. 1598.
9. Henry IV. 2nd Part. 1600.
10. Passionate Pilgrim. 1599.
11. Richard III. 1597.
12. Venus and Adonis. 1593.
13. Troilus and Cressida. 1609.

2. *Those by C. Praetorius.*

14. Much Ado About Nothing. 1600.
15. Taming of a Shrew. 1594.
16. Merchant of Venice. 1600. (I. R. for Thomas Heyes.)
17. Richard II. 1597. Duke of Devonshire's copy. (*on stone.*)
18. Richard II. 1597. Mr Huth. (*fotograft.*)
19. Richard II. 1608. Brit. Mus. (*fotograft.*)
20. Richard II. 1634. (*fotograft.*)
21. Pericles. 1609. Q_1.
22. Pericles. 1609. Q_2.
23. The Whole Contention. 1619. Part I. (for 2 Henry VI.).
24. The Whole Contention. 1619. Part II. (for 3 Henry VI.).
25. Romeo and Juliet. 1597.
26. Romeo and Juliet. 1599.
27. Henry V. 1600.
28. Henry V. 1608.
29. Titus Andronicus. 1600.
30. Sonnets and Lover's Complaint. 1609.
31. Othello. 1622.
32. Othello. 1630.
33. King Lear. 1608. Q_1. (N. Butter, *Pide Bull.*)
34. King Lear. 1608. Q_2. (N. Butter.)
35. Lucrece. 1594.
36. Romeo and Juliet. Undated. (*fotograft.*)
37. Contention. 1594. (*not yet done.*)
38. True Tragedy. 1595. (*not yet done.*)
39. The Famous Victories. 1598. (*not yet done.*)
40. The Troublesome Raigne. 1591. (For King John: *not yet done.*)

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INTRODUCTION.

UNDER date 4th August, presumably in the year 1600, there is an entry in the Stationers' Register to the effect that *Much Ado about Nothing* and other plays, *As You Like It*, *Henry V.* and *Every Man in his Humour*, were "to be staied."

The reason for this stay or injunction is not known; but shortly after, on the 23rd August 1600, we find *Much Ado* and the second part of *Henry IV.* entered for Andrew Wyse and William Aspley, and both plays were printed for them, in this same year, by V. S. [Valentine Sims].

As regards the Publishers of these two Plays, I do not find in the British Museum Catalogue of Early English Books that Wise and Aspley had ever any other partnership relations. Wise appears to have been in business from 1594 to 1602. During the years 1597–1599 he published the first two Qo. editions of each of the three plays, *Richard II.*, *Richard III.* and *1st Pt. of Henry IV.*, and, in 1602, a third edition of *Richard III.* On the 25th Jan. 1603 he transferred his right in all three to Matthew Law, by whom nine subsequent editions (2 of *Richard II.*; 3 of *Richard III*, and 4 of *Henry IV. Pt.* 1) were published prior to their appearance in the first Folio. In view of these numerous publications it is a singular but unexplained fact that no second quarto editions of two such popular plays as *Much Ado* and *2 Henry IV.* should have been issued.

Aspley is shown by the Catalogue above-mentioned to have been in business from 1599 to 1630; his name appears on the title-page of some copies of the *Sonnets*, 1609, as the bookseller, and in 1623 he was one of the four booksellers at whose charges the first Fo. ed. of Shakespeare's Plays was printed (see Colophon of that vol.). The two plays with which he was specially connected made their appearance in that volume under very different circumstances; for while, as we shall see, *Much Ado* was little more than a reprint of the Qo., it is very doubtful whether the Qo. ed. of *2 Henry IV.* was used at all as copy for the Fo. version. Mr H. A. Evans does indeed, in his Introduction (p. viii) to the Facsimile of that Qo., point out some instances of what appears to be reproduction of Qo. blunders, and a few other seeming points of contact might be adduced; but on the whole I incline to agree with the Cambridge

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editors that the printers of the Fo. had only MS. copy for 2 *Henry IV.*

The entries in the Stationers' Register of course determine the latest date that can be assigned to *Much Ado.* How much earlier it was produced is uncertain. Meres does not mention it in the list of twelve plays which he gives in his *Palladis Tamia,* 1598, and although this of course is no proof that it was not then in existence, Meres has shown himself to be so well informed with regard to the literature of the day, published and unpublished, that the absence from his list of so popular a play as this must at once have become, has been accepted by nearly all editors as a main argument for fixing the date of its production at some time in 1599, 1600.

Another point to be considered in regard to date is Will Kemp's connection with the play: from the prefixes to the speeches in Act IV. sc. ii., we learn that he took the part of Dogberry and was no doubt its first personator, or "creator," according to modern theatrical parlance, and did we know the exact time at which he withdrew from the Chamberlain's Company we might possibly be able to determine the date to be assigned to the play more precisely than by the entries in the Stationers' Register we now can do. That he was a member of the Company in 1598 we have the testimony of Ben Jonson, who includes his name in the list of Chamberlain's men who acted in *Every Man in his Humour* in that year; Jonson does not mention him in a similar list of the actors of *Every Man out of his Humour,* performed by the same Company in 1599; but we cannot therefore conclude that Kemp had then quitted that company; Kemp and Shakespeare, in fact, are in exactly the same position as regards these two plays: both performed in the first, neither in the second; and we know of course that Shakespeare had not parted company with the Chamberlain's men. From this mention of him in 1598 till his name appears in Henslowe's Diary, 10 March, 1602, we know nothing of Kemp's career, with the exception of the fact that in the Lent of 1599 he danced his famous Morris between London and Norwich; but as this was during the theatrical vacation it would not have interfered with his duties in the company. The account of this Morris, which he published the next year as his *Nine daies wonder,* was entered in the Stationers' Register, 22 April, 1600.

The appearance then of Kemp's name in the play, as the original personator of Dogberry, is in no way inconsistent with the generally received opinion that *Much Ado* was produced at some time between the date of Meres's book and the entries of the play in the Stationers' Register.

I have said above that Meres makes no mention of our play;

but included in his list of twelve he gives us the title of a play called *Loue labours wonne*, and Mr A. E. Brae in his pamphlet entitled *Collier, Coleridge and Shakespeare*, 1860, endeavours to prove that this is merely another title for *Much Ado about Nothing*. This identification if established would necessarily throw back the date of our play to some time not later than the beginning of 1598; but I own, ingenious as Mr Brae's arguments certainly are, they fail to carry conviction to my mind. *Much Ado* is not the only play which is supposed to be referred to under the title of *Love labours wonne*: Dr. Farmer in his *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare* (see Vol. I. p. 314, *Var.* 1821), suggested *All's Well that Ends Well* as probably the supposed lost play; the Rev. Joseph Hunter in his *Disquisition on The Tempest*, 1841, and again in his *New Illustrations*, 1845, Vol. I. pp. 130 and 359, argued in favour of *The Tempest;* Prof. G. L. Craik, in his *English of Shakespeare*, 1st ed. 1857, p. 7, advocated the claims of the *Taming of the Shrew*, and after carefully considering all these claims I see no reason why *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* should not also enter into the competition; though possibly it will be thought that a title which can be made to fit so many different plays probably belongs to none of them.

At any rate it does not seem to me that the claim of *Much Ado* to this title is sufficiently established to allow of its intervention on the question of the date of that play.

A matter presenting less scope for ingenious speculation, but one of very much greater importance, is that of the relationship of the Qo. and Fo. versions; 'till this is ascertained, and their relative authority determined, no satisfactory settlement of the text is possible.

As regards *Much Ado* the question presents no great difficulties, and it may be stated briefly and with confidence that in 1623 the only authority Messrs. Heminge and Condell had for their Folio edition was a copy of the quarto containing a few MS. alterations and corrections made probably years before, and not specially for this purpose. By far the greater number of the variations of the Fo. must, however, be attributed to carelessness on the part of its printer, not to MS. alterations made by the corrector of the Qo.; indeed the fewness and small importance of those which can be attributed to deliberate alteration and correction forbid the notion that any independent MS. of the Play could have been consulted for the purpose, or that any sustained effort was made to supply the deficiencies of the Qo. and correct its errors.

In the Fo. we find the Play divided into Acts, and Sc. i. of the first Act marked; but no further attempt to number the scenes was made. The Fo., or rather the "corrected" Qo. from which it was printed, must also be credited with the marking of four or five

more *exits* than appear in the Qo.; but, as regards the stage directions and distribution of speeches generally, both editions are almost equally deficient and faulty. The only variations worth notice in this respect are:—

Act II. sc. i. l. 88. The Qo. has *Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Beneaicke, and Balthaser, or dumb Iohn.* To this muddle the Fo., without correcting it, adds *Maskers with a drum.* In the same scene, l. 160, the Qo. has *Dance exeunt*, which the Fo. changes to *Exeunt./ Musicke for the dance.*

In the same scene, l. 217, the Qo. has *Enter the Prince, Hero, Leonato, Iohn and Borachio, and Conrade.* The Fo. rightly omits all after *Prince*, and at l. 270 where the Qo. has *Enter Claudio and Beatrice*, the Fo. rightly adds *Hero, Leonato.*

Act II. sc. iii. at line 38 the Qo. has *Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Musicke*, and at line 44 *Enter Balthaser with musicke.* For these two stage directions the Fo. only has, at l. 38, *Enter Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Iacke Wilson.*[1]

Act II. sc. iii. 195. A speech given to *Claudio* in Qo. is assigned to *Leonato* in Fo.; either may be right.

Act III. sc. i. in the first entrance, the Fo. corrupts Hero's *Gentlewomen* to *Gentlemen.*

Act III. sc. ii. l. 54. A speech wrongly assigned to *Bened'ck* in the Qo. is in the Fo. given to *Prince;* though it might equally well have been given to *Leonato.*

Act V. sc. i. l. 209. The Fo. for *Enter Constables* has *Enter Constable;* and at l. 267 where the Qo. has *Enter Leonato, his brother and the Sexton*, the Fo. wrongly omits all after *Leonato.*

Act V. sc. iv. l. 33, at the entry of the Prince and Claudio, the Fo. changes *and two or three other* to *with attendants.*

In other places the Fo. reproduces the stage directions just as they appear in the Qo.; Innogen, wife of Leonato, a character not

[1] Mr Collier supposed that "Iacke Wilson" might be identical with a "John Wilson, son of Nicholas Wilson, minstrel," a record of whose birth, 24th April, 1585, he had discovered in the registers of St. Giles, Cripplegate; he thought too that this might be the same individual as the "Mr Wilson, the singer," who dined with Alleyn, the actor, on the anniversary of his wedding, 22 Oct. 1620, and that he was not only a singer, but a composer of Shaksperian music. (See his *Memoirs of Alleyn*, Sh. Soc. 1841, p. 153.—*Sh. Soc. Papers*, 1845, Vol. II. p. 33, and Introduction to *Memoirs of Actors*, Sh. Soc. 1846, p. xvii.) This last piece of information Mr Collier would seem to have derived in an imperfect manner from Dr E. F. Rimbault, who in 1846, in a pamphlet entitled *Who was Jack Wilson?* sought, with some degree of probability, to identify him with John Wilson, Dr and Prof. of Music at Oxford, who was born 1594 and died 1673.

It is evident from the birth dates of these two individuals that neither of them could be the original personator of Balthasar; but either might, for anything we know to the contrary, have taken the part at some revival of the play. Hence the insertion of the name in the theatrical copy of the Qo.

in the Play at all, is reproduced in the Fo. as in the Qo. in the entrances to Act I. sc. i., and Act II. sc. i.; in Act I. sc. i. l. 205, the Fo. follows the Qo. in making "John the bastard" enter with Don Pedro, though he has nothing whatever to do with this part of the scene; the cousins or attendants whom Leonato addresses at the end of Act I. sc. ii, are no more provided in the stage directions of the Fo. than of the Qo.; in Act II. sc. i. ll. 104, 107, 109, three speeches belonging to Balthasar remain in the Fo. as in the Qo. to Benedick; no correction appears in the Fo. of the jumble by which in III. iii. l. 187 Conrade is made to speak both his own and the watchman's speeches; the confusion of prefixes to the speeches in Act IV. sc. ii.—where Kemp's and Cowley's names are given instead of those of the characters they represented—is the same in the Fo. as in the Qo., with the exception that the prefix to the mangled speeches, ll. 70, 71, which the Qo. gives to *Couley* is changed in the Fo. to *Sex.* i. e. the Sexton, who has already left the stage; in Act V. sc. iii., in both Qo. and Fo., Claudio's speech ll. 22, 23 is given to *Lo.* [*Lord*] and printed as prose; and in Act V. sc. v. l. 98, the Fo., as the Qo., gives to Leonato the privilege which belongs to Benedick, of stopping Beatrice's sweet mouth.

In the text itself we find in the Fo. the same persistence in the errors and peculiarities of the Qo. The following instances—the number of which might be largely increased—will, added to those already displayed in connection with the stage-directions, suffice to establish the dependence of the Fo. on the Qo. :—

I. i. 1 and 10. In both places Don *Pedro* called *Peter.*

I. i. 59—

"But for the *stuffing well*, we are all mortall."—*stuffing* and *well* wrongly connected.

I. i. 89. *Benedick* called *Benedict.*

III. ii. 28—

"Well euery one can*not* master a griefe, but he that has it."

III. ii. 118—

"If you loue her, then to-morrow wed her."—Comma should come after *then.*

III. iii. 11. *George* Sea-cole. In Act III. sc. v. he becomes *Francis.*

III. iii. 158—

"how the Prince Claudio and my master planted, and placed, and possessed by my master Don Iohn."—Evidently corrupt; should probably read—"how the Prince and Claudio planted and placed and possessed by my master Don Iohn."

III. v. 10—

"Speakes a little *of* the matter."—*of* for *off.*

IV. i. 57—
"Out on thee seeming," etc.

IV. i. 103—
"About *thy* thoughts and counsailes of thy heart."—*thy* for *the.*

IV. i. 145-147. Benedick's speech. "Sir, sir, . . . what to say."—Printed as prose.

IV. i. 157-160. Commencement of Friar's speech. "Heare me . . . I have markt."—Printed as prose.[1]

IV. i. 204—
"Your daughter heere *the Princesse* (*left for dead*)"—should be—*the princes left for dead.*

V. ii. 47—
"let me goe with that I *came*"—should be *came for.*

It was perhaps scarcely worth while to take into account obvious blunders peculiar to the Fo., but, as showing the general inferiority of its text, the following instances may be noted:—

I. i. 51. *ease* for *eate;* I. iii. 41. *I will make* for *I make;* II. i.

[1] On this instance the Cambridge Editors remark—"The commencement of the Friar's speech comes at the bottom of page, sig. G. i. (r) of the Quarto. The type appears to have been accidentally dislocated, and the passage was then set up as prose." The Editors further suppose that "some words were probably lost in the operation," and they accordingly mark a lacuna in their *Globe* edition. A theory of a bit of "pie" resulting in corruption of the text demands very careful consideration. I do not perceive that any words are wanting for the sense, and my examination of the page (49 of our Facsimile) inclines me to believe that there was nothing accidental in the printing of a portion of it as prose. The page, it will be observed, is abnormally long, and consists of 39 lines; whereas the regular full page, including line for signature and catch-word, has 38 only: but if this page had been printed metrically throughout it would have required 42 lines; of which three would have been occupied by Benedick's speech, ll. 145-7, and four by the commencement of the Friar's speech. Now it is not to be supposed that the whole play was set up by one man, and it is therefore allowable to imagine that the portion assigned to—let us say—Compositor A. may have ended with the last line of this page: the following portion, given out to Compositor B., may have been made up into pages before A. had finished his stint. Were B.'s pages to be pulled to pieces to make room for the fag end of A.'s work? I imagine not: it was less trouble to compress a few lines of verse into prose and, with the help of an extra line, to get all A.'s work into his last page, as we now see it in p. 49 of our Facsimile. Probably to a somewhat similar transaction in the printing office was due the appearance in prose of the first part of Mercutio's famous *Queen Mab* speech in *Romeo and Juliet.* See p. 19 of the Facsimile of Q2 of that play, edited by Mr H. A. Evans.

It is worth noting here that this p. 49 of *Much Ado* has received some slight corrections in its passage through the press: in l. 125, "Do not liue Hero, do not ope thine eies:", the British Museum copy, C. 12. g. 29, has a comma in lieu of a colon at the end of the line; in line 149, "Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?", the same copy has no comma after *Lady* and has a full stop in place of the note of interrogation at the end of the line; the last words also of the page, "haue markt," do not in this copy range with the line above, but are the breadth of one letter within the line.

100. *Loue for Ioue;* II. i. 284. *this* Lady tongue for *my* Ladie Tongue; II. i. 305. something of *a* iealous complexion, *a* for *that;* II. i. 328. he is in *my* heart, *my* for *her;* II. ii. 34. *on* for *Don;* III. i. 79. It were a better death, *to* die with mockes, *to* for *then;* IV. i. 128. *reward* for *rereward;* V. i. 6. *comfort* for *comforter;* V. ii. 33. *name* for *names;* V. ii. 38, 39. *time* (twice) for *rime.*

The chief sins however of the Fo. in this respect are sins of omission; besides numerous single words, the omission of which may be unhesitatingly ascribed to carelessness on the part of the printer, the Fo. omits some eight or nine lines, here noted; the omitted passages being printed in Italic:—

I. i. 311, 312—

"And I will breake with hir, *and with her father,*
And thou shalt haue her: wast not to this end," etc.

A common error of the press: the eye of the compositor glancing to the *her* in the second line, he overlooked the words between. See similar instances noted at the end of Dr Furnivall's *Forewords* to the Q2 *Hamlet* Facsimile.

III. ii. 33-37—

"as to be a Dutch-man to day, a French-man to morrow, *or in the shape of two countries at once, as a Germaine from the waste downwards, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no dublet.*"

Malone suggested that this passage may have been struck out "to avoid giving any offence to the Spaniards, with whom James became a friend in 1604."

IV. i. 20—

"What men daily do, *not knowing what they do.*"

Here, as in the first instance, the compositor having set up the first *do*, supposed he had arrived at the second.

IV. ii. 18-23—

Kemp [Dogberry] loq. . . . "maisters, do you serue God?
Both. Yea sir we hope.
Kem. Write down, that they hope they serue God: and write God first, for God defend but God should goe before such villaines:
maisters it is proued," etc.

Blackstone supposes that this omission "may be accounted for from the stat. 3 Jac. I. c. 21."

V. iv. 33—

"*Here comes the Prince and Claudio.*"

I have given Malone's and Blackstone's reasons for the omission of two of these passages; but I apprehend they may all be set down to accident.

In reviewing then the errors of the Fo., enough, I think, has been said to prove beyond dispute its connection with the Qo. : it now remains to consider whether that connection has been in any way affected by the supervising authority of a MS. copy of the play, as has been shown to be the case with some other plays where the Qo. editions have been made use of in providing "copy" for the printers of the Fo.

I have already expressed my conviction that no such MS. copy was consulted for the Fo. edition of *Much Ado;* but in order that the reader may have before him all the evidence on which such an opinion could be founded, I have made out a list of all the corrections and variations of the Fo. that have been received into modern texts, Mr. Knight's especially; for he more than any other editor has taken the Fo. for his guide. When he rejects its authority in favour of the Qo. the Fo. reading must indeed be "grandly suspicious." In this list I have marked with a star [*] all such variations as I consider to be obvious corrections: there will not, I think, be found among them any that might not have been made by an ordinarily intelligent reader of the Qo. A number of others I have marked with a dagger [†]: most of these seem to me very palpable blunders, and I should not have encumbered my list with them were it not that Mr Knight has adopted and popularized them in his numerous editions. Another few I have marked with a parallel [‖]: their acceptance or rejection would, I presume, depend on the degree of authority to be assigned to Qo. or Fo. For the rest, which I have left blank, I think we need not look further than to the caprice or carelessness of the printer for their origin.

The quotations are taken from the Qo., followed by the variations of the Fo.

I. i. 51— "*he is*"—*he's*.

I. i. 90— "ere *a* be *cured*"—ere *he* be *cur'd*.

I. i. 93— "*You will neuer*"—*you'l ne'er*.

‖ I. i. 96— "*are you* come to meet your trouble"—*you are*.

† I. i. 106— "Were you in doubt *sir*"—*sir* om.

‖ I. i. 147— "*That* is the summe of all"—*This*.

I. i. 314— "How sweetly *you do* minister to loue"—*do you*.

† I. ii. 4— "I can tell you *strange* newes"—*strange* om.

I. ii. 10— "in *mine* orchard"—*my*.

† I. ii. 11— "were thus *much* ouer-heard"—*much* om.

I. iii. 8— "what blessing *brings* it"—*bringeth*.

‖ I. iii. 9— "*at least* a patient sufferance"—*yet*.

† I. iii. 25— "where it is impossible you should take *true* root"—*true* om.
† I. iii. 63— "I whipt *me* behind the arras"—*me* om.
II. i. 17— "if *a* could"—*he.*
II. i. 34— "light *on* a husband"—*vpon.*
† II. i. 56— "*father,* as it please you"—*father* om.
† II. i. 65— "to make *an* account of her life"—*an* om.
II. i. 146— "he both *pleases* men"—*pleaseth.*
II. i. 195— "*county*"—*count.*
† II. i. 222— "I tolde him, and I thinke *I* tolde him true"—last *I* om.
† II. i. 223— "the *goodwil* of this young Lady"—*will.*
† II. i. 263— "to binde him *vp* a rod"—*vp* om.
II. i. 251— "*that* I was duller than a great thawe"—*and that.*
† II. i. 288— "a double heart for *his* single one"—*a.*
II. i. 346— "out *a* question"—*of.*
II. i. 370— "*countie*"—*counte.*
† II. i. 376— "to haue al things answer *my* mind"—*my* om.
† II. ii. 37— "as *in loue* of your brothers honor"—*in a loue.*
II. ii. 49— "such seeming *truth* of Heroes disloyaltie"—*truths.*
† II. ii. 57— "Be *you* constant"—*thou.*
* II. iii. 141— "your daughter told *of vs*"—*vs of.*
‖ II. iii. 162— "he would *make but* a sport of it"—*but make.*
II. iii. 178— "what *a* will say"—*he.*
II. iii. 192— "*Before* God"—*'Fore.*
† II. iii. 197— "you may *say* he is wise"—*see.*
† II. iii. 199— "a *most* christianlike feare"—*most* om.
† II. iii. 207— "shall we go *seeke* Benedicke"—*see.*
II. iii. 217— "vnworthy *so* good a lady"—*to haue so.*
† II. iii. 223— "*gentlewomen*"—*gentlewoman.*
* III. i. 4— "*Vrsley*"—*Vrsula.*
‖ III. i. 12— "to listen our *propose*"—*purpose.*
‖ III. i. 58— "lest *sheele* make sport at it"—*she.*
‖ III. i. 104— "Shees *limed* I warrant you"—*tane.*
III. ii. 39— "as you would haue it *appeare* he is"—*to appeare.*
† III. ii. 64— "conclude, *conclude,* he is in loue"—*conclude* om.
III. ii. 106— "she *has bin*"—*hath beene.*
† III. ii. 132— "beare it coldely but 'till *midnight*"—*night.*
† III. iii. 37— "for the watch to babble and *to* talke"—*to* om.

III. iii. 45— "bid *those* that are drunke"—*them.*
* III. iii. 85— "the *statutes*"—*statues.*
III. iii. 134— "this vij. *yeere*"—*yeares.*
† III. iii. 148— "Al this I see, and *I* see"—*I* om.
† III. iii. 162— "And thought *they* Margaret was Hero?"—*thy.*
‖ III. iii. 48— "youle *see* he shall lacke no barnes"—*look.*
‖ III. v. 27— "a thousand *pound* more"—*times.*
III. v. 34— "*ha* tane"—*haue.*
† III. v. 54— "as *it* may appeare vnto you"—*it* om.
† IV. i. 77— "I charge thee *do so*, as thou art my child"—*doe.*
IV. i. 88— "Why then *are you* no maiden"—*you are.*
IV. i. 97— "Not to be *spoke* of"—*spoken.*
‖ IV. i. 163— "In angel whitenesse *beate* away those blushes"—*beare.*
* IV. i. 277— "Do not *sweare* and eate it"—*sweare by it.*
† IV. i. 293— "You kill me to deny *it*"—*it* om.
IV. i. 318— "*Counte, Counte Comfect*"—*Count, Comfect.*
IV. i. 336— "I will kisse your hand, and so *I* leaue you"—*I* om.
* IV. ii. 53— "Yea *by* masse"—*by th'.*
V. i. 7— "whose wrongs *doe* sute with mine"—*doth.*
* V. i. 24— "Would giue preceptiall *medcine* to rage"—*medicine.*
V. i. 63— "*mine* innocent child"—*my.*
V. i. 162— "true *said* she, a fine little one"—*saies.*
† V. i. 272— "Art *thou* the slaue"—*thou thou* (printing the verse as prose).
† V. i. 81— "he shall liue no longer in *monument* then the *bell rings*"—*monuments . . . bells ring.*
* V. iii. 10— "Praising her when I am *dead*"—*dombe.*
‖ V. iii. 21— "*Heauily heauily*"—*Heauenly, heauenly.*
V. iv. 7— "all things *sorts*"—*sort.*

The Acts, scenes and lines of the Facsimile are numbered in accordance with the Globe edition on the outer margin; on this margin also a dagger [†] marks every line varying in any way in its *text* from the Fo.; lines peculiar to the Qo. and omitted in Fo. are marked with an asterisk [*]. On the inner margin a dagger marks any variation of the stage directions or of the prefixes to speeches, and a caret [<] marks the places where additional stage directions and the Act divisions are found in the Fo.

P. A. DANIEL.

Sept. 1886.

Much adoe about Nothing.

As it hath been ſundrie times publikely acted by the right honourable, the Lord Chamberlaine his ſeruants.

Written by William Shakeſpeare.

LONDON
Printed by V.S. for Andrew Wiſe, and William Aſpley.
1600.

Much adoe about Nothing.

Enter Leonato gouernour of Meſſina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, with a meſſenger.

Leonato.

I Learne in this letter, that don Peter of Arragon comes this night to Meſſina.

Meſſ. He is very neare by this, he was not three leagues off when I left him.

Leona. How many gentlemen haue you loſt in this action?

Meſſ. But few of any ſort, and none of name.

Leona. A victory is twice it ſelfe, when the atchiuer brings home full numbers: I find here, that don Peter hath beſtowed much honour on a yong Florentine called Claudio.

Meſſ. Much deſeru'd on his part, and equally remembred by don Pedro, he hath borne himſelfe beyond the promiſe of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion, he hath indeed better bettred expectation then you muſt expect of me to tell you how.

Leo. He hath an vncle here in Meſſina will be very much glad of it.

Meſſ. I haue already deliuered him letters, and there appeares much ioy in him, euen ſo much, that ioy could not ſhew it ſelfe modeſt enough, without a badge of bitterneſſe.

Leo. Did he breake out into teares?

Meſſ. In great meaſure.

Leo. A kind ouerflow of kindneſſe, there are no faces truer
then thoſe that are ſo waſht, how much better is it to weepe at
ioy, then to ioy at weeping?

Beatr. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto returnd from the
warres or no?

Meſſen. I know none of that name, ladie, there was none
ſuch in the army of any ſort.

Leonato What is he that you aske for neece?

Hero My coſen meanes Signior Benedicke of Padua.

Meſſ. O hee's returnd, and as pleaſant as euer he was.

Bea. He ſet vp his bills here in Meſſina, and challengde
Cupid at the Flight, and my vncles foole reading the chalenge
ſubſcribde for Cupid, and challengde him at the Burbolt: I
pray you, how many hath he kild and eaten in theſe warres?
but how many hath he kild? for indeede I promiſed to eate all
of his killing.

Leo. Faith neece you taxe Signior Benedicke too much,
but heele be meet with you, I doubt it not.

Meſſ. He hath done good ſeruice lady in theſe warres.

Beat. You had muſty vittaile, and he hath holpe to eate it,
he is a very valiaunt trencher man, he hath an excellent ſto-
macke.

Meſſ. And a good ſouldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good ſouldiour to a Lady, but what is he to a
Lord?

Meſſ. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, ſtufft with al hono-
rable vertues.

Beat. It is ſo indeed, he is no leſſe then a ſtuft man, but for
the ſtuffing wel, we are al mortall.

Leo. You muſt not, ſir, miſtake my neece, there is a kind
of mery warre betwixt Signior Benedicke and her, they neuer
meet but there's a skirmiſh of wit betweene them.

Beat. Alas he gets nothing by that, in our laſt conflict, 4 of his
fiue wits went halting off, and now is the whole man gouernd
with one, ſo that if he haue wit enough to keep himſelf warm,
let him beare it for a difference between himſelf and his horſe,
for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reaſona-

ble

ble creature,who is his companion now? he hath euery month a new ſworne brother.

Meſſ. Iſt poſſible?

Beat. Very eaſily poſſible,he weares his faith but as the faſhion of his hat,it euer changes with the next blocke.

Meſſ. I ſee lady the gentleman is not in your bookes.

Beat. No,and he were, I would burne my ſtudy,but I pray you who is his companion? is there no yong ſquarer now that will make a voyage with him to the diuell?

Meſſ. He is moſt in the companie of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord, he will hang vpon him like a diſeaſe, hee is ſooner caught than the peſtilence, and the taker runs preſently madde, God help the noble Claudio, if he haue caught the Benedict,it will coſt him a thouſand pound ere a be cur'd.

Meſſ. I will holde friends with you Ladie.

Beat. Do good friend.

Leon. You will neuer runne madde niece.

Beat. No,not till a hote Ianuary.

Meſſ. Don Pedro is approacht.

Enter don Pedro,Claudio,Benedicke,Balthaſar and Iohn the baſtard.

Pedro Good ſignior Leonato, are you come to meet your trouble: the faſhion of the world is,to auoyd coſt,and you incounter it.

Leon. Neuer came trouble to my houſe, in the likeneſſe of your grace, for trouble being gone, comfort ſhould remaine: but when you depart from mee, ſorrow abides, and happines takes his leaue.

Pedro You embrace your charge too willingly: I thincke this is your daughter.

Leonato Her mother hath many times tolde me ſo.

Bened. Were you in doubt ſir that you askt her?

Leonato Signior Benedicke,no, for then were you a child.

Pedro You haue it full Benedicke,wee may gheſſe by this, what you are, being a man, truely the Lady fathers her ſelfe:

be happy Lady, for you are like an honourable father.

Be. If Signior Leonato be her father, ſhe would not haue his head on her ſhoulders for all Meſſina as like him as ſhe is.

Beat. I wonder that you will ſtill be talking, ſignior Benedicke, no body markes you.

Bene. What my deere lady Diſdaine! are you yet liuing?

Bea. Is it poſſible Diſdaine ſhould die, while ſhe hath ſuch meete foode to feede it, as ſignior Benedicke? Curteſie it ſelfe muſt conuert to Diſdaine, if you come in her preſence.

Bene. Then is curteſie a turne-coate, but it is certaine I am loued of all Ladies, onelie you excepted: and I would I could finde in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truely I loue none.

Beat. A deere happineſſe to women, they would elſe haue beene troubled with a pernitious ſuter, I thanke God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that, I had rather heare my dog barke at a crow, than a man ſweare he loues me.

Bene. God keepe your Ladiſhip ſtil in that mind, ſo ſome Gentleman or other ſhall ſcape a predeſtinate ſcratcht face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worſe, and twere ſuch a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrat teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue, is better than a beaſt of yours.

Ben. I would my horſe had the ſpeed of your tongue, and ſo good a continuer, but keep your way a Gods name, I haue done.

Beat. You alwayes end with a iades tricke, I knowe you of olde.

† *Pedro* That is the ſumme of all: Leonato, ſignior Claudio, and ſignior Benedicke, my deere friend Leonato, hath inuited you all, I tell him we ſhall ſtay here, at the leaſt a moneth, and he heartily praies ſome occaſion may detaine vs longer, I dare ſweare he is no hypocrite, but praies from his heart.

Leon. If you ſweare, my lord, you ſhall not be forſworne, let mee bidde you welcome, my lord, being reconciled to the Prince your brother: I owe you all duetie.

Iohn I thanke you, I am not of many wordes, but I thanke you

Leon.

Leon. Pleaſe it your grace leade on?

Pedro Your hand Leonato, we wil go together.

Exeunt. Manent Benedicke & Claudio.

Clau. Benedicke, didſt thou note the daughter of Signior (Leonato?

Bene. I noted her not, but I lookte on her,

Clau. Is ſhe not a modeſt yong ladie?

Bene. Do you queſtion me as an honeſt man ſhould doe, for my ſimple true iudgement? or would you haue me ſpeake after my cuſtome, as being a profeſſed tyrant to their ſex?

Claudio No, I pray thee ſpeake in ſober iudgement.

Bene. Why yfaith me thinks ſhees too low for a hie praiſe, too browne for a faire praiſe, and too litle for a great praiſe, onlie this commendation I can affoord her, that were ſhee other then ſhe is, ſhe were vnhanſome, and being no other, but as ſhe is, I do not like her.

Claudio Thou thinkeſt I am in ſport, I pray thee tell mee truelie how thou lik'ſt her.

Bene. Would you buie her that you enquier after her?

Claudio Can the world buie ſuch a iewel?

Bene. Yea, and a caſe to putte it into, but ſpeake you this with a ſad brow? or doe you play the flowting iacke, to tell vs Cupid is a good Hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare Carpenter: Come, in what key ſhall a man take you to go in the ſong?

Claudio In mine eie, ſhee is the ſweeteſt Ladie that euer I lookt on.

Bened. I can ſee yet without ſpectacles, and I ſee no ſuch matter: theres her coſin, and ſhe were not poſſeſt with a fury, exceedes her as much in beautie, as the firſt of Maie dooth the laſt of December: but I hope you haue no intent to turne husband, haue you?

Claudio I would ſcarce truſt my ſelfe, though I had ſworne the contrarie, if Hero would be my wife.

Bened. Iſt come to this? in faith hath not the worlde one man but he will weare his cappe with ſuſpition? ſhall I neuer ſee a batcheller of three ſcore againe? go to yfaith, and thou wilt needes thruſt thy necke into a yoke, weare the print of it, and ſigh away ſundaies: looke, don Pedro is returned to ſeeke you.

Enter

Much adoe

Enter don Pedro, Iohn the baſtard.

Pedro What ſecret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonatoes?

Bene. I would your Grace would conſtraine me to tell.

Pedro I charge thee on thy allegeance.

Ben. You heare, Count Claudio, I can be ſecret as a dumb man, I woulde haue you thinke ſo (but on my allegiance, marke you this, on my allegiance) he is in loue, with who? now that is your Graces part: marke how ſhort his anſwer is, with Hero Leonatoes ſhort daughter.

Clau. If this were ſo, ſo were it vttred.

Bened. Like the olde tale, my Lord, it is not ſo, nor twas not ſo: but indeede, God forbid it ſhould be ſo.

Claudio If my paſſion change not ſhortly, God forbid it ſhould be otherwiſe.

Pedro Amen, if you loue her, for the Lady is very well worthy.

Claudio You ſpeake this to fetch me in, my Lord.

Pedro By my troth I ſpeake my thought.

Claudio And in faith, my Lord, I ſpoke mine.

Bened. And by my two faiths and troths, my Lorde, I ſpoke mine.

Clau. That I loue her, I feele.

Pedro That ſhe is worthy, I know.

Bened. That I neither feele how ſhe ſhould be loued, nor know how ſhe ſhould be worthie, is the opinion that fire can not melt out of me, I will die in it at the ſtake.

Pedro Thou waſt euer an obſtinate heretique in the deſpight of Beauty.

Clau. And neuer could maintaine his part, but in the force of his wil.

Bene. That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that ſhe brought me vp, I likewiſe giue her moſt humble thankes: but that I will haue a rechate winded in my forchead, or hang my bugle in an inuiſible baldricke, all women ſhall pardon mee: becauſe I will not doe them the wrong to miſtruſt any, I will doe my ſelfe the right to truſt none: and the fine is, (for the which

which I may go the finer,) I will liue a bacheller.

Pedro I ſhall ſee thee ere I die, looke pale with loue.

Bene. With anger, with ſickeneſſe, or with hunger, my Lord, not with loue: proue that euer I looſe more blood with loue then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eies with a Ballad-makers penne, and hang me vp at the doore of a brothel houſe for the ſigne of blinde Cupid.

Pedro Well, if euer thou doſt fall from this faith, thou wilt proue a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a Cat, and ſhoote at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the ſhoulder, and calld Adam.

Pedro Well, as time ſhal trie: in time the ſauage bull doth beare the yoake.

Bene. The ſauage bull may, but if euer the ſenſible Benedicke beare it, plucke off the bulls hornes, and ſet them in my forehead, and let me be vildly painted, and in ſuch great letters as they write, here is good horſe to hyre: let them ſignifie vnder my ſigne, here you may ſee Benedicke the married man.

Claudio If this ſhould euer happen, thou wouldſt be horn madde.

Pedro Nay, if Cupid haue not ſpent all his quiuer in Venice, thou wilt quake for this ſhortly.

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

Pedro Well, you will temporize with the howres, in the meane time, good ſignior Benedicke, repaire to Leonatoes, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at ſupper, for indeede he hath made great preparation.

Bened. I haue almoſt matter enough in mee for ſuche an Embaſſage, and ſo I commit you.

Clau. To the tuition of God: from my houſe if I had it.

Pedro The ſixt of Iuly: your louing friend Benedicke.

Bened. Nay mocke not, mocke not, the body of your diſcourſe is ſometime guarded with fragments, and the guardes are but ſlightly baſted on neither, ere you flowt old ends any further, examine your conſcience, and ſo I leaue you. *exit*

Claudio My liege, your Highneſſe nowe may doe mee good.

Pedro My loue is thine to teach, teach it but how,
And thou ſhalt ſee how apt it is to learne
Any hard leſſon that may do thee good.

Clau. Hath Leonato any ſonne, my lord?

Pedro No childe but Hero, thees his onely heire:
Dooſt thou affect her Claudio?

Claudio O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I looked vpon her with a ſouldiers eie,
That liked, but had a rougher taske in hand,
Than to driue liking to the name of loue:
But now I am returnde, and that warre-thoughts,
Haue left their places vacant: in their roomes,
Come thronging ſoft and delicate deſires,
All prompting mee how faire yong Hero is,
Saying I liked her ere I went to warres.

Pedro Thou wilt be like a louer preſently,
And tire the hearer with a booke of words,
If thou doſt loue faire Hero, cheriſh it,
And I wil breake with hir, and with her father,
And thou ſhalt haue her: waſt not to this end,
That thou beganſt to twiſt ſo fine a ſtorie?

Clau. How ſweetly you do miniſter to loue,
That know loues griefe by his complexion!
But leſt my liking might too ſodaine ſeeme,
I would haue ſalude it with a longer treatiſe.

Pedro What need the bridge much broder then the flood?
The faireſt graunt is the neceſſitie:
Looke what wil ſerue is fit: tis once, thou loueſt,
And I wil fit thee with the remedie,
I know we ſhall haue reuelling to night,
I wil aſſume thy part in ſome diſguiſe,
And tell faire Hero I am Claudio,
And in her boſome ile vnclaſpe my heart,
And take her hearing priſoner with the force

And

And ſtrong incounter of my amorous tale:
Then after to her father will I breake,
And the concluſion is, ſhe ſhal be thine,
In practiſe let vs put it preſently. *exeunt.*

Enter Leonato and an old man brother to Leonato

Leo. How now brother, where is my coſen your ſonne, hath he prouided this muſique?

Old He is very buſie about it, but brother, I can tell you ſtrange newes that you yet dreampt not of.

Leo. Are they good?

Old As the euents ſtampes them, but they haue a good couer: they ſhew well outward, the prince and Count Claudio walking in a thicke pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much ouer-heard by a man of mine: the prince diſcouered to Claudio that he loued my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a daunce, and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the preſent time by the top, and inſtantly breake with you of it.

Leo Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

Old A good ſharp fellow, I wil ſend for him, and queſtion him your ſelfe.

Leo. No, no, we wil hold it as a dreame til it appeare it ſelf: but I will acquaint my daughter withall, that ſhe may bee the better prepared for an anſwer, if peraduenture this be true: go you and tel hir of it: cooſins, you know what you haue to doe, O I crie you mercie friend, go you with me and I wil vſe your skill: good coſin haue a care this buſie time. *exeunt.*

Enter ſir Iohn the baſtard, and Conrade his companion.

Con. What the goodyeere my lord, why are you thus out of meaſure ſad?

Iohn There is no meaſure in the occaſion that breeds, therfore the ſadneſſe is without limit.

Con. You ſhould heare reaſon.

Iohn And when I haue heard it, what bleſſing brings it?

Con If not a preſent remedy, at leaſt a patient ſufferance.

Iohn I wonder that thou (being as thou ſaiſt, thou art, borne vnder Saturne) goeſt about to apply a morall medicine, to a

mortifying miſchiefe: I cannot hide what I am: I muſt be ſad when I haue cauſe, and ſmile at no mans ieſts, eate when I haue ſtomack, and wait for no mans leiſure: ſleep when I am drowſie, and tend on no mans buſineſſe, laugh when I am mery, and claw no man in his humor.

Con. Yea but you muſt not make the full ſhow of this till you may do it without controllment, you haue of late ſtoode out againſt your brother, and he hath tane you newly into his grace, where it is impoſſible you ſhould take true root, but by the faire weather that you make your ſelf, it is needful that you frame the ſeaſon for your owne harueſt.

Iohn I had rather be a canker in a hedge, then a roſe in his grace, and it better fits my bloud to be diſdain'd of all, then to faſhion a cariage to rob loue from any: in this (thogh I cannot be ſaid to be a flatering honeſt man) it muſt not be denied but I am a plain dealing villaine, I am truſted with a muſſel, and enfraunchiſde with a clogge, therfore I haue decreed, not to ſing in my cage: if I had my mouth I would bite: if I had my liberty I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and ſeeke not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no vſe of your diſcontent?

Iohn I make all vſe of it, for I vſe it only,
Who comes here? what newes Borachio?

Enter Borachio.

Bor. I came yonder from a great ſupper, the prince your brother is royally entertain'd by Leonato, and I can giue you intelligence of an intended mariage.

Iohn Will it ſerue for any model to build miſchiefe on? what is he for a foole that betrothes himſelfe to vnquietneſſe?

Bor. Mary it is your bothers right hand.

Iohn Who, the moſt exquiſite Claudio?

Bor. Euen he.

Iohn A proper ſquier, and who, and who, which way looks he?

Bor. Mary one Hero the daughter and heire of Leonato.

Iohn A very forward March-chicke, how came you to this?

Bor.

about Nothing.

Liii.

Bor Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was ſmoaking a muſty roome, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand in ſad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed vpon, that the prince ſhould wooe Hero for himſelfe, and hauing obtain'd her, giue her to Counte Claudio.

Iohn Come, come, let vs thither, this may proue food to my diſpleaſure, that yong ſtart-vp hath all the glory of my ouerthrow: if I can croſſe him any way, I bleſſe my ſelfe euery way, you are both ſure, and wil aſſiſt me.

Conr. To the death my Lord.

Iohn Let vs to the great ſupper, their cheere is the greater that I am ſubdued, would the cooke were a my mind, ſhall we go proue whats to be done?

Bor. Weele wait vpon your lordſhip. *exit.*

II.i.

Enter Leonato, his brother, his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, and a kinſman.

Leonato Was not counte Iohn here at ſupper?

brother I ſaw him not.

Beatrice How tartely that gentleman lookes, I neuer can ſee him but I am heart-burn'd an hower after.

Hero He is of a very melancholy diſpoſition.

Beatrice He were an excellent man that were made iuſt in the mid-way between him and Benedick, the one is too like an image and ſaies nothing, and the other too like my ladies eldeſt ſonne, euermore tatling.

Leonato Then halfe ſignior Benedickes tongue in Counte Iohns mouth, and halfe Counte Iohns melancholy in Signior Benedickes face.

Beatrice With a good legge and a good foote vnckle, and money inough in his purſe, ſuch a man would winne any woman in the world if a could get her good will.

Leonato By my troth neece thou wilt neuer get thee a huſband, if thou be ſo ſhrewd of thy tongue.

brother Infaith ſhees too curſt.

Beatrice Too curſt is more then curſt, I ſhall leſſen

Gods ſending that way, for it is ſaide, God ſends a curſt cow ſhort hornes, but to a cow too curſt, he ſends none.

Leonato So, by being too curſt, God will ſend you no hornes.

Beatrice Iuſt, if he ſend me no husband, for the which bleſſing I am at him vpon my knees euery morning and euening: Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face, I had rather lie in the woollen!

Leonato You may light on a husband that hath no beard.

Beatrice What ſhould I do with him, dreſſe him in my apparell and make him my waiting gentlewoman? he that hath a beard, is more then a youth: and he that hath no beard, is leſſe then a man: and he that is more then a youth, is not for me, and he that is leſſe then a man, I am not for him, therefore I will euen take ſixpence in earneſt of the Berrord, and leade his apes into hell.

Leonato Well then, go you into hell.

Beatrice No but to the gate, and there will the diuell meete me like an old cuckold with hornes on his head, and ſay, get you to heauen Beatrice, get you to heauen, heeres no place for you maids, ſo deliuer I vp my apes and away to ſaint Peter: for the heauens, he ſhewes me where the Batchellers ſit, and there liue we as merry as the day is long.

Brother Well neece, I truſt you will be rulde by your father.

Beatrice Yes faith, it is my coſens dutie to make curſie and ſay, father, as it pleaſe you: but yet for all that coſin, let him be a handſome fellow, or elſe make an other curſie, and ſay, father, as it pleaſe me.

Leonato Well neece, I hope to ſee you one day fitted with a husband.

Beatrice Not til God make men of ſome other mettal then earth, would it not grieue a woman to be ouer-maſterd with a peece of valiant duſt? to make an account of her life to a clod of waiward marle? no vncle, ile none: Adams ſonnes are my brethren, and truely I holde it a ſinne to match in my kinred.

Leonato

Leonato Daughter, remember what I told you, if the prince do ſolicite you in that kind, you know your anſwer.

Beatrice The fault will be in the muſique coſin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is meaſure in euery thing, and ſo daunce out the anſwer, for here me Hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch ijgge, a meaſure, and a cinquepace: the firſt ſuite is hot and haſty like a Scotch ijgge (and ful as fantaſticall) the wedding manerly modeſt (as a meaſure) full of ſtate and aunchentry, and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faſter and faſter, til he ſincke into his graue.

Leonato Coſin you apprehend paſſing ſhrewdly.

Beatrice I haue a good eie vnckle, I can ſee a church by day-light.

Leonato The reuellers are entring brother, make good roome.

Enter prince, Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthaſer, or dumb Iohn.

Pedro Lady will you walke about with your friend?

Hero So, you walke ſoftly, and looke ſweetly, and ſay nothing, I am yours for the walke, and eſpecially when I walk away.

Pedro With me in your company.

Hero I may ſay ſo when I pleaſe.

Pedro And when pleaſe you to ſay ſo?

Hero When I like your fauour, for God defend the lute ſhould be like the caſe.

Pedro My viſor is Philemons roofe, within the houſe is Ioue.

Hero Why then your viſor ſhould be thatcht.

Pedro Speake low if you ſpeake loue.

Bene. Well, I would you did like me.

Mar. So would not I for your owne ſake, for I haue many ill qualities.

Bene. Which is one?

Mar. I ſay my praiers alowd.

Bene.

Bene. I loue you the better, the hearers may cry Amen.

Marg. God match me with a good dauncer.

Balth. Amen.

Marg. And God keepe him out of my ſight when the daunce is done: anſwer Clarke.

Balth. No more words, the Clarke is anſwered.

Vrſula I know you well enough, you are ſignior Antho-nio.

Antho. At a word I am not.

Vrſula I knowe you by the wagling of your head.

Antho. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

Vrſula You coulde neuer doe him ſo ill well, vnleſſe you were the very man: heeres his drie hand vp and downe, you are he, you are he.

Antho. At a word, I am not.

Vrſula Come, come, do you thinke I do not know you by your excellent wit? can vertue hide it ſelfe? go to, mumme, you are he, graces will appeere, and theres an end.

Beat. Will you not tell me who tolde you ſo?

Bened. No, you ſhall pardon me.

Beat. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

Bened. Not now.

Beat. That I was diſdainefull, and that I had my good wit out of the hundred mery tales: wel, this was ſignior Benedick that ſaid ſo.

Bened. Whats he?

Beat. I am ſure you know him well enough.

Bened. Not I, beleeue me.

Beat. Did he neuer make you laugh?

Bened. I pray you what is he?

Beat. Why he is the princes ieaſter, a very dul fool, only his gift is, in deuiſing impoſſible ſlaunders, none but Libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villanie, for he both pleaſes men and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beate him: I am ſure he is in the Fleete, I would he had boorded me.

Bene. When I know the Gentleman, ile tell him what you ſay.

Beat.

Beat. Do,do,heele but breake a comparison or two on me, which peraduẽture,(not markt,or not laught at)ſtrikes him into melancholy and then theres a partrige wing ſaued, for the foole will eate no ſupper that night: wee muſt follow the leaders.

Bene. In euery good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they leade to any ill, I will leaue them at the next turning. *Dance exeunt*

Iohn Sure my brother is amorous on Hero,and hath withdrawne her father to breake with him about it: the Ladies follow her,and but one viſor remaines.

Borachio And that is Claudio, I knowe him by his bearing.

Iohn Are not you ſignior Benedicke?

Clau. You know me well,I am he.

Iohn Signior,you are very neere my brother in his loue,he is enamourd on Hero,I pray you diſſwade him from her,ſhe is no equall for his birth, you may doe the parte of an honeſt man in it.

Claudio How know you he loues her?

Iohn I heard him ſweare his affection.

Borac. So did I too,and he ſwore hee would marry her to night.

Iohn Come let vs to the banquet. *exeunt: manet Clau.*

Claud. Thus anſwer I in name of Benedicke,
But heare theſe ill newes with the eares of Claudio:
Tis certaine ſo,the Prince wooes for himſelfe,
Friendſhip is conſtant in all other things,
Saue in the office and affaires of loue:
Therefore all hearts in loue vſe their owne tongues.
Let euery eie negotiate for it ſelfe,
And truſt no Agent: for Beauty is a witch,
Againſt whoſe charmes,faith melteth into blood:
This is an accident of hourely proofe, (*dicke*
Which I miſtruſted not: farewel therefore Hero. *Enter Bene-*

Benedicke Count Claudio.

Claudio Yea,the ſame.

Bene. Come,will you go with me?

Claudio Whither?

Bene. Euen to the next willow,about your owne buſines, county: what faſhion will you weare the garland of? about your necke, like an Vſurers chaine?or vnder your arme, like a Lieutenants ſcarffe? you muſt weare it one way,for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claudio I wiſh him ioy of her.

Bened. Why thats ſpoken like an honeſt Drouier, ſo they ſell bullockes: but did you thinke the Prince would haue ſerued you thus?

Claudio I pray you leaue me.

Benedicke Ho now you ſtrike like the blindman, twas the boy that ſtole your meate,and youle beate the poſt.

Claudio If it will not be, ile leaue you. *exit*

Benedicke Alas poore hurt foule,now will hee creepe into ſedges: but that my Ladie Beatrice ſhould know me,and not know mee: the princes foole!hah, it may be I goe vnder that title becauſe I am merry: yea but ſo I am apte to doe my ſelfe wrong: I am not ſo reputed,it is the baſe(though bitter)diſpoſition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her perſon, and ſo giues me out: well,ile be reuenged as I may.

Enter the Prince,Hero,Leonato,Iohn and Boracchio, and Conrade.

Pedro Now ſignior,wheres the Counte, did you ſee him?

Benedicke Troth my lord, I haue played the part of Ladie Fame, I found him heere as melancholy as a Lodge in a Warren. I tolde him, and I thinke I tolde him true,that your grace had got the goodwil of this yoong Lady,and I offred him my company to a willow tree,either to make him a garland,as being forſaken,or to binde him vp a rod,as being worthie to bee whipt.

Pedro To be whipt,whats his fault?

Benedicke The flatte tranſgreſſion of a Schoole-boy, who being ouer-ioyed with finding a birds neſt,ſhewes it his companion,and he ſteales it.

Pedro Wilt thou make a truſt a tranſgreſſion? the tranſgreſ-

ſion

ſion is in the ſtealer.

Benedicke Yet it had not beene amiſſe the rodde had beene made, & the garland too, for the garland he might haue worn himſelfe, and the rodde he might haue beſtowed on you, who (as I take it) haue ſtolne his birds neſt.

Pedro I wil but teach them to ſing, and reſtore them to the owner.

Benedicke If their ſinging anſwer your ſaying, by my faith you ſay honeſtly.

Pedro The ladie Beatrice hath a quarrell to you, the Gentleman that daunſt with her, told her ſhee is much wrongd by you.

Bened. O ſhee miſuſde me paſt the indurance of a blocke: an oake but with one greene leafe on it, would haue anſwered her: my very viſor beganne to aſſume life, and ſcold with her: ſhe tolde me, not thinking I had beene my ſelfe, that I was the Princes ieſter, that I was duller than a great thawe, huddleing ieſt vpon ieſt, with ſuch impoſſible conueiance vpon me, that I ſtoode like a man at a marke, with a whole army ſhooting at me: ſhe ſpeakes poynyards, and euery word ſtabbes: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no liuing neere her, ſhee would infect to the north ſtarre: I woulde not marry her, though ſhee were indowed with al that Adam had left him before he tranſgreſt, ſhe would haue made Hercules haue turnd ſpit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too: come, talke not of her, you ſhall find her the infernall Ate in good apparell, I would to God ſome ſcholler woulde coniure her, for certainely, while ſhe is heere, a man may liue as quiet in hell, as in a ſanctuarie, and people ſinne vpon purpoſe, becauſe they would goe thither, ſo indeede all diſquiet, horrour, and perturbation followes her.

Enter Claudio and Beatrice.

Pedro Looke heere ſhe comes.

Benedicke Will your grace command me any ſeruice to the worldes end? I will go on the ſlighteſt arrand now to the Antypodes that you can deuiſe to ſend mee on: I will fetch you a tooth-picker now from the furtheſt inch of Aſia: bring you

the length of Preſter Iohns foot: fetch you a haire off the great Chams beard: doe you any embaſſage to the Pigmies, rather than holde three words conference, with this harpy, you haue no imployment for me?

Pedro None, but to deſire your good company.

Benedicke O God ſir, heeres a diſh I loue not, I cannot indure my Ladie Tongue. *exit.*

Pedro Come Lady, come, you haue loſt the heart of ſignior Benedicke.

Beatrice Indeed my Lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gaue him vſe for it, a double heart for his ſingle one, marry once before he wonne it of me, with falſe dice, therefore your grace may well ſay I haue loſt it.

Pedro You haue put him downe Lady, you haue put him downe.

Beatrice So I would not he ſhould do me, my Lord, leſt I ſhould proone the mother of fooles: I haue brought Counte Claudio, whom you ſent me to ſeeke.

Pedro Why how now Counte, wherefore are you ſad?

Claudio Not ſad my Lord.

Pedro How then? ſicke?

Claudio Neither, my Lord.

Beatrice The Counte is neither ſad, nor ſicke, nor merry, nor well: but ciuill Counte, ciuil as an orange, and ſomething of that iealous complexion.

Pedro Ifaith Lady, I think your blazon to be true, though ile be ſworne, if he be ſo, his conceit is falſe: heere Claudio, I haue wooed in thy name, and faire Hero is won, I haue broke with her father, and his good will obtained, name the day of marriage, and God giue thee ioy.

Leonato Counte take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace ſay Amen to it.

Beatrice Speake Counte, tis your Qu.

Claudio Silence is the perfecteſt Herault of ioy, I were but little happy if I could ſay, how much? Lady, as you are mine, I am yours, I giue away my ſelfe for you, and doate vpon the exchange. *Beatr.*

Beat. Speake cosin, or (if you cannot) stop his mouth with a kisse, and let not him speake neither.

Pedro Infaith lady you haue a merry heart.

Beatr. Yea my lord I thanke it, poore foole it keepes on the windy side of Care, my cosin tells him in his eare that he is in her heart

Clau. And so she doth cosin.

Beat. Good Lord for aliance: thus goes euery one to the world but I, and I am sun-burnt, I may sit in a corner and crie, heigh ho for a husband.

Pedro Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather haue one of your fathers getting: hath your grace ne're a brother like you? your father got excellent husbands if a maide coulde come by them.

Prince Will you haue me? lady.

Beatr. No my lord, vnles I might haue another for working-daies, your grace is too costly to weare euery day: but I beseech your grace pardon me, I was born to speake all mirth, and no matter.

Prince Your silence most offends me, and to be merry, best becomes you, for out a question, you were borne in a merry hower.

Beatr. No sure my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a starre daunst, and vnder that was I borne, cosins God giue you ioy.

Leonato Neece, will you looke to those things I tolde you of?

Beat I crie you mercy vncle, by your graces pardon.

exit Beatrice.

Prince By my troth a pleasant spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her my lord, she is neuer sad, but when she sleeps, & not euer sad then: for I haue heard my daughter say, she hath often dreampt of vnhappines, and wakt her selfe with laughing.

Pedro She cannot indure to heare tell of a husband.

Leonato O by no meanes, she mockes al her wooers out of suite.

II.i.

Prince She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leonato O Lord,my lord,if they were but a weeke married, they would talke themſelues madde.

Prince Countie Claudio, when meane you to goe to church?

Clau. To morow my lord, Time goes on crutches,til Loue haue all his rites.

Leonato Not til monday, my deare ſonne,which is hence a iuſt ſeuennight,and a time too briefe too, to haue al things anſwer my mind.

Prince Come,you ſhake the head at ſo long a breathing, but I warrant thee Claudio,the time ſhall not go dully by vs, I wil in the interim, vndertake one of Hercules labors,which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the lady Beatrice into a mountaine of affection,th'one with th'other, I would faine haue it a match, and I doubt not but to faſhion it,if you three will but miniſter ſuch aſſiſtance as I ſhall giue you direction.

Leonato My lord,I am for you,though it coſt me ten nights watchings.

Claud. And I my Lord.

Prince And you too gentle Hero?

Hero I wil do any modeſt office,my lord,to help my coſin to a good husband.

Prince And Benedicke is not the vnhopefulleſt husband that I know:thus farre can I praiſe him,he is of a noble ſtrain, of approoued valour,and confirmde honeſty, I will teach you how to humour your coſin, that ſhe ſhall fal in loue with Benedicke, and I,with your two helpes, wil ſo practiſe on Benedicke, that in diſpight of his quicke wit,and his queaſie ſtomacke,he ſhall fall in loue with Beatrice:if we can do this, Cupid is no longer an Archer, his glory ſhall bee ours, for we are the onely loue-gods., goe in with mee, and I will tell you my drift. *exit.*

II.ii.

Enter Iohn and Borachio.

Iohn It is ſo,the Counte Claudio ſhall marry the daughter of Leonato.

Bora. Yea my lord,but I can croſſe it.

Iohn

Iohn Any barre,any croſſe,any impediment, will be medcinable to me,I am ſicke in diſpleaſure to him,and whatſoeuer comes athwart his affection, ranges euenly with mine, how canſt thou croſſe this marriage?

Bor. Not honeſtly my lord,but ſo couertly,that no diſhoneſty ſhall appeare in me.

Iohn Shew me briefely how.

Bor. I thinke I told your lordſhip a yeere ſince, how much I am in the fauour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

Iohn I remember.

Bor. I can at any vnſeaſonable inſtant of the night, appoint her to looke out at her ladies chamber window.

Iohn What life is in that to be the death of this mariage?

Bor. The poiſon of that lies in you to temper, goe you to the prince your brother, ſpare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honor in marrying the renowned Claudio,whoſe eſtimation do you mightily hold vp, to a contaminated ſtale, ſuch a one as Hero.

Iohn What proofe ſhall I make of that?

Bor. Proofe enough,to miſuſe the prince, to vexe Claudio, to vndoe Hero, and kill Leonato, looke you for any other iſſue?

Iohn Onely to diſpight them I will endeuour any thing.

Bor. Go then,find me a meet houre,to draw don Pedro and the Counte Claudio alone, tell them that you know that Hero loues me, intend a kind of zeale both to the prince & Claudio (as in loue of your brothers honor who hath made this match) and his friends reputation, who is thus like to bee coſen'd with the ſemblance of a maid,that you haue diſcouer'd thus:they wil ſcarcely beleeue this without triall:offer them inſtances which ſhall beare no leſſe likelihood, than to ſee me at her chamber window,heare me call Margaret Hero,heare Marg.terme me Claudio,& bring them to ſee this the very night before the intended wedding,for in the mean time,I wil ſo faſhion the matter,that Hero ſhal be abſent,and there ſhal appeere ſuch ſeeming truth of Heroes diſloyaltie, that iealouſie ſhal be cald aſſurance

rance,and al the preparation ouerthrowne.

Iohn Grow this to what aduerſe iſſue it can, I will put it in practiſe: be cunning in the working this,and thy fee is a thouſand ducates.

Bor. Be you conſtant in the accuſation, and my cunning ſhall not ſhame me.

Iohn I will preſently go learne their day of marriage. *exit*

II.iii.

Enter Benedicke alone.

Bene. Boy.

Boy Signior.

Bene. In my chamber window lies a booke, bring it hither to me in the orchard.

Boy. I am here already ſir. *exit.*

Bene. I know that,but I would haue thee hence and here againe. I do much wonder,that one man ſeeing how much an other man is a foole,when he dedicates his behauiours to loue, wil after he hath laught at ſuch ſhallow follies in others,becom the argument of his owne ſcorne, by falling in loue, and ſuch a man is Claudio, I haue knowne when there was no muſique with him but the drumme and the fife, and now had he rather heare the taber and the pipe: I haue knowne when he would haue walkt ten mile afoot, to ſee a good armour, and now wil he lie ten nights awake caruing the faſhion of a new dublet:he was woont to ſpeake plaine,and to the purpoſe(like an honeſt man and a ſouldier)and now is he turnd ortography,his words are a very fantaſticall banquet, iuſt ſo many ſtrange diſhes: may I be ſo conuerted and ſee with theſe eies? I cannot tell, I thinke not: I wil not be ſworne but loue may transforme me to an oyſter, but ile take my oath on it,till he haue made and oyſter of me, he ſhall neuer make me ſuch a foole: one woman is faire, yet I am well, an other is wiſe, yet I am well: an other vertuous,yet I am wel:but till all graces be in one woman, one womã ſhal not com in my grace: rich ſhe ſhal be thats certain, wiſe,or ile none,vertuous,or ile neuer cheapen her:faire,or ile neuer looke on her,mild,or come not neare me, noble,or not I for an angell, of good diſcourſe,an excellent muſitian,and her haire

haire ſhall be of what colour it pleaſe God. hah! the prince and monſieur Loue, I wil hide me in the arbor.

Enter prince, Leonato, Claudio, Muſicke.

Prince Come ſhall we heare this muſique?

Claud. Yea my good lord: how ſtil the euening is,
As huſht on purpoſe to grace harmonie!

Prince See you where Benedicke hath hid himſelfe?

Claud. O very wel my lord: the muſique ended,
Weele fit the kid-foxe with a penny worth.

Enter Balthaſer with muſicke.

Prince Come Balthaſer, weele heare that ſong againe.

Balth. O good my lord, taxe not ſo bad a voice,
To ſlaunder muſicke any more then once.

Prince It is the witneſſe ſtill of excellencie,
To put a ſtrange face on his owne perfection,
I pray thee ſing, and let me wooe no more.

Balth. Becauſe you talke of wooing I will ſing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his ſute,
To her he thinkes not worthy, yet he wooes,
Yet will he ſweare he loues.

Prince Nay pray thee come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,
Theres not a note of mine thats worth the noting.

Prince Why theſe are very crotchets that he ſpeakes,
Note notes forſooth, and nothing.

Bene. Now diuine aire, now is his ſoule rauiſht, is it not ſtrange that ſheepes guts ſhould hale ſoules out of mens bodies? well a horne for my mony when alls done.

The Song.

Sigh no more ladies, ſigh no more,
Men were deceiuers euer,
One foote in ſea, and one on ſhore,
To one thing conſtant neuer,
Then ſigh not ſo, but let them go,
And be you blith and bonnie,

Conuerting all your ſoundes of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

Sing no more ditties, ſing no moe,
Of dumps ſo dull and heauy,
The fraud of men was euer ſo,
Since ſummer firſt was leauy,
Then ſigh not ſo,&c.

Prince By my troth a good ſong.

Balth. And an ill ſinger my lord.

Prince Ha, no no faith, thou ſingſt wel enough for a ſhift.

Ben. And he had bin a dog that ſhould haue howld thus, they would haue hangd him, and I pray God his bad voice bode no miſcheefe, I had as liue haue heard the night-rauen, come what plague could haue come after it.

Prince Yea mary, dooſt thou heare Balthaſar? I pray thee get vs ſome excellent muſique: for to morow night we would haue it at the ladie Heroes chamber window.

Balth. The beſt I can my lord.

Exit Balthaſar.

Prince Do ſo, farewell. Come hither Leonato, what was it you told mee of to day, that your niece Beatrice was in loue with ſignior Benedicke?

Cla. O I, ſtalke on, ſtalk on, the foule ſits. I did neuer think that lady would haue loued any man.

Leo. No nor I neither, but moſt wonderful, that ſhe ſhould ſo dote on ſignior Benedicke, whome ſhe hath in all outward behauiors ſeemd euer to abhorre.

Bene. Iſt poſſible? ſits the wind in that corner?

Leo. By my troth my Lord, I cannot tell what to thinke of it, but that ſhe loues him with an inraged affection, it is paſt the infinite of thought.

Prince May be ſhe doth but counterfeit.

Claud. Faith like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit? there was neuer counterfeit of paſſion, came ſo neare the life of paſſion as ſhe diſcouers it.

Prince

Prince Why what effects of paſſion ſhewes ſhe?

Claud. Baite the hooke wel, this fiſh will bite.

Leon. What effects my Lord? ſhe wil ſit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did indeede.

Prince How, how I pray you! you amaze me, I would haue thought her ſpirite had beene inuincible againſt all aſſaults of affection.

Leo. I would haue ſworn it had, my lord, eſpecially againſt Benedicke.

Bene. I ſhould think this a gull, but that the white bearded fellow ſpeakes it: knauery cannot ſure hide himſelf in ſuch reuerence.

Claud. He hath tane th'infection, hold it vp.

Prince Hath ſhee made her affection knowne to Benedicke?

Leonato No, and ſweares ſhee neuer will, thats her torment.

Claudio Tis true indeed, ſo your daughter ſaies: ſhall I, ſaies ſhe, that haue ſo oft encountred him with ſcorne, write to him that I loue him?

Leo. This ſaies ſhe now when ſhe is beginning to write to him, for ſheel be vp twenty times a night, and there will ſhe ſit in her ſmocke til ſhe haue writ a ſheete of paper: my daughter tels vs all.

Clau. Now you talk of a ſheet of paper, I remember a prety ieſt your daughter told of vs.

Leonato O when ſhe had writ it, and was reading it ouer, ſhe found Benedicke and Beatrice betweene the ſheete.

Claudio That.

Leon. O ſhe tore the letter into a thouſand halfpence, raild at her ſelf, that ſhe ſhould be ſo immodeſt to write, to one that ſhe knew would flout her, I meaſure him, ſaies ſhe, by my own ſpirit, for I ſhould flout him, if he writ to me, yea thogh I loue him I ſhould.

Clau. Then downe vpon her knees ſhe falls, weepes, ſobs, beates her heart, teares her haire, prayes, curſes, O ſweet Bene-

dicke, God giue me patience.

Leonato She doth indeed, my daughter ſaies ſo, and the extaſie hath ſo much ouerborne her, that my daughter is ſometime afeard ſhee will doe a deſperate out-rage to her ſelfe, it is very true.

Prince It were good that Benedicke knew of it by ſome other, if ſhe will not diſcouer it.

Claudio To what end: he would make but a ſport of it, and torment the poore Lady worſe.

Prince And he ſhould, it were an almes to hang him, ſhees an excellent ſweete lady, and (out of all ſuſpition,) ſhe is vertuous.

Claudio And ſhe is exceeding wiſe.

Prince In euery thing but in louing Benedicke.

Leonato O my Lord, wiſedome and blood combating in ſo tender a body, we haue ten proofes to one, that blood hath the victory, I am ſory for her, as I haue iuſt cauſe, being her vncle, and her gardian.

Prince I would ſhee had beſtowed this dotage on mee, I would haue daft all other reſpects, and made her halfe my ſelfe: I pray you tell Benedicke of it, and heare what a will ſay.

Leonato Were it good thinke you?

Claudio Hero thinkes ſurely ſhe will die, for ſhe ſayes ſhee will die, if he loue her not, and ſhee will die ere ſhee make her loue knowne, and ſhe will die if he wooe her, rather than ſhee will bate one breath of her accuſtomed croſneſſe.

Prince She doth well, if ſhee ſhoulde make tender of her loue, tis very poſſible heele ſcorne it, for the man (as you know all) hath a contemptible ſpirite.

Claudio He is a very proper man.

Prince He hath indeede a good outward happines.

Claudio Before God, and in my mind, very wiſe.

Prince Hee dooth indeede ſhew ſome ſparkes that are like wit.

Claudio And I take him to be valiant.

Prince As Hector, I aſſure you, and in the mannaging of quarrels you may ſay he is wiſe, for either hee auoydes them with

with great diſcretion,or vndertakes them with a moſt chriſti-
anlike feare.

Leonato If he do feare God,a muſt neceſſarily keep peace,
if hee breake the peace, hee ought to enter into a quarrel with
feare and trembling.

Prince And ſo will hee doe, for the man doth feare God,
howſoeuer it ſeemes not in him, by ſome large ieſtes hee will
make: well I am ſory for your niece, ſhall we go ſeeke Bene-
dicke, and tell him of her loue?

Claudio Neuer tell him,my Lord, let her weare it out with
good counſell.

Leonato Nay thats impoſſible, ſhee may weare her heart
out firſt.

Prince Well, we will heare further of it by your daughter,
let it coole the while, I loue Benedicke wel,and I could wiſh
he would modeſtly examine himſelfe, to ſee how much he is
vnworthy ſo good a lady.

Leonato My lord,will you walke? dinner is ready.

Claudio If he do not doate on her vpon this, I will neuer
truſt my expectation.

Prince Let there be the ſame nette ſpread for her,and that
muſt your daughter and her gentlewomen carry: the ſporte
will be, when they holde one an opinion of an others dotage,
and no ſuch matter, thats the ſcene that I woulde ſee, which
wil be meerely a dumbe ſhew: let vs ſend her to call him in to
dinner.

Benedicke This can be no tricke, the conference was ſadly
borne, they haue the trueth of this from Hero, they ſeeme to
pittie the Lady: it ſeemes her affections haue their full bent:
loue me? why it muſt be requited: I heare how I am cenſurde,
they ſay I will beare my ſelfe prowdly, if I perceiue the loue
come from her: they ſay too,that ſhe will rather die than giue
anie ſigne of affection: I did neuer thinke to marry, I muſt
not ſeeme prowd,happy are they that heare their detractions,
and can put them to mending: they ſay the Lady is faire, tis a
trueth, I can beare them witneſſe: and vertuous, tis ſo, I can-
not reproouc it, and wiſe, but for louing me, by my troth it is

no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her follie, for
I will be horribly in loue with her, I may chaunce haue ſome
odde quirkes and remnants of witte broken on me, becauſe I
haue railed ſo long againſt marriage: but doth not the appe-
tite alter? a man loues the meate in his youth, that he cannot in-
dure in his age. Shall quippes and ſentences, and theſe paper
bullets of the brain awe a man from the carreere of his humor?
No, the world muſt be peopled. When I ſaide I woulde die a
batcheller, I did not think I ſhould liue til I were married, here
comes Beatrice: by this day, ſhees a faire lady, I doe ſpie ſome
markes of loue in her.

Enter Beatrice.

Beatr. Againſt my will I am ſent to bid you come in to din-
ner.

Bene. Faire Beatrice, I thanke you for your paines.

Beat. I tooke no more paines for thoſe thankes, then you
take paines to thanke me, if it had bin painful I would not haue
come.

Bene. You take pleaſure then in the meſſage.

Beat. Yea iuſt ſo much as you may take vppon a kniues
point, and choake a daw withall: you haue no ſtomach ſignior,
fare you well. *exit.*

Bene. Ha, againſt my will I am ſent to bid you come in to
dinner: theres a double meaning in that: I took no more paines
for thoſe thanks thē you took pains to thank me, thats as much
as to ſay, any pains that I take for you is as eaſy as thanks: if I do
not take pitty of her I am a villaine, if I do not loue her I am a
Iew, I will go get her picture, *exit.*

III.i. *Enter Hero and two Gentlewomen, Margaret, and Vrſley.*

Hero. Good Margaret runne thee to the parlour,
There ſhalt thou find my coſin Beatrice,
Propoſing with the prince and Claudio,
Whiſper her eare and tell her I and Vrſley,
Walke in the orchard, and our whole diſcourſe
Is all of her, ſay that thou ouer-heardſt vs,
And bid her ſteale into the pleached bowere
Where hony-ſuckles ripened by the ſunne,

Forbid

Forbid the ſunne to enter:like fauourites,
Made proud by princes, that aduaunce their pride,
Againſt that power that bred it,there will ſhe hide her,
To liſten our propoſe,this is thy office,
Beare thee well in it,and leaue vs alone.
Marg. Ile make her come I warrant you preſently.
Hero. Now Vrſula,when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley vp and downe,
Our talke muſt onely be of Benedicke,
When I do name him let it be thy part,
To praiſe him more than euer man did merite,
My talke to thee muſt be how Benedicke,
Is ſicke in loue with Beatrice:of this matter,
Is little Cupids crafty arrow made,
That onely wounds by heare-ſay:now begin,
For looke where Beatrice like a Lapwing runs
Cloſe by the ground, to heare our conference.

Enter Beatrice.

Vrſula The pleaſantſt angling is to ſee the fiſh
Cut with her golden ores the ſiluer ſtreame,
And greedily deuoure the treacherous baite:
So angle we for Beatrice, who euen now,
Is couched in the wood-bine couerture,
Feare you not my part of the dialogue.
Hero Then go we neare her that her eare looſe nothing,
Of the falſe ſweete baite that we lay for it:
No truly Vrſula,ſhe is too diſdainfull,
I know her ſpirits are as coy and wild,
As haggerds of the rocke.
Vrſula But are you ſure,
That Benedicke loues Beatrice ſo intirely?
Hero So ſaies the prince,and my new trothed Lord.
Vrſula And did they bid you tel her of it,madame?
Hero They did intreate me to acquaint her of it,
But I perſwaded them,if they lou'de Benedicke,
To wiſh him wraſtle with affection,
And neuer to let Beatrice know of it.

Vrſula

2 lines above

Vrſula Why did you ſo, dooth not the gentleman
Deſerue as full as fortunate a bed,
As euer Beatrice ſhall couch vpon?
Hero O God of loue! I know he doth deſerue,
As much as may be yeelded to a man:
But nature neuer framde a womans hart,
Of prowder ſtuffe then that of Beatrice:
Diſdaine and Scorne ride ſparkling in her eies,
Miſpriſing what they looke on, and her wit
Valewes it ſelfe ſo highly, that to her
All matter els ſeemes weake: ſhe cannot loue,
Nor take no ſhape nor proiect of affection,
She is ſo ſelfe indeared.
Vrſula Sure I thinke ſo,
And therefore certainely it were not good,
She knew his loue leſt ſheele make ſport at it.
Hero Why you ſpeake truth. I neuer yet ſaw man,
How wiſe, how noble, yong, how rarely featured,
But ſhe would ſpel him backward: if faire faced,
She would ſweare the gentleman ſhould be her ſiſter:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an antique,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If low, an agot very vildly cut:
If ſpeaking, why a vane blowne with all winds:
If ſilent, why a blocke moued with none:
So turnes ſhe euery man the wrong ſide out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which ſimpleneſſe and merite purchaſeth.
Vrſula Sure, ſure, ſuch carping is not commendable.
Hero No not to be ſo odde, and from all faſhions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable,
But who dare tell her ſo? if I ſhould ſpeake,
She would mocke me into ayre, O ſhe would laugh me
Out of my ſelfe, preſſe me to death with wit,
Therefore let Benedicke like couerd fire,
Conſume away in ſighes, waſte inwardly:
It were a better death, then die with mockes,

Which is as bad as die with tickling.
Vrſula Yet tel her of it, heare what ſhe wil ſay.
Hero No rather I will go to Benedicke,
And counſaile him to fight againſt his paſſion,
And truly ile deuiſe ſome honeſt ſlaunders,
To ſtaine my coſin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may impoiſon liking.
Vrſula O do not do your coſin ſuch a wrong,
She cannot be ſo much without true iudgement,
Hauing ſo ſwift and excellent a wit,
As ſhe is priſde to haue, as to refuſe
So rare a gentleman as ſignior Benedicke.
Hero He is the onely man of Italy,
Alwaies excepted my deare Claudio
Vrſula I pray you be not angry with me, madame,
Speaking my fancy: ſignior Benedicke,
For ſhape, for bearing argument and valour,
Goes formoſt in report through Italy.
Hero Indeed he hath an excellent good name.
Vrſula His excellence did earne it, ere he had it:
When are you married madame?
Hero Why euery day to morrow, come go in,
Ile ſhew thee ſome attyres, and haue thy counſaile,
Which is the beſt to furniſh me to morrow.
Vrſula Shees limed I warrant you,
We haue caught her madame.
Hero If it proue ſo, then louing goes by haps,
Some Cupid kills with arrowes ſome with traps.
Beat. What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and ſcorne ſo much?
Contempt, farewel, and maiden pride, adew,
No glory liues behind the backe of ſuch.
And Benedicke, loue on I will requite thee,
Taming my wild heart to thy louing hand:
If thou doſt loue, my kindneſſe ſhall incite thee
To bind our loues vp in a holy band.
For others ſay thou doſt deſerue, and I

Beleeue it better then reportingly. *exit.*

III.ii. *Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedicke, and Leonato.*

Prince I doe but ſtay til your mariage be conſummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claud. Ile bring you thither my lord, if youle vouchſafe me.

Prince Nay that would be as great a ſoyle in the new gloſſe of your marriage, as to ſhew a child his new coate and forbid him to weare it, I wil only be bold with Benedick for his company, for from the crowne of his head, to the ſole of his foot, he is al mirth, he hath twice or thrice cut Cupides bow-ſtring, and the little hang-man dare not ſhoot at him, he hath a heart as ſound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinkes, his tongue ſpeakes.

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I haue bin.

Leo. So ſay I, me thinkes you are ſadder.

Clau. I hope he be in loue.

Prince Hang him truant, theres no true drop of bloud in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be ſadde, he wantes money.

Bene. I haue the tooth-ach.

Prince Draw it.

Bene. Hang it.

Clau. You muſt hang it firſt, and draw it afterwards.

Prince What? ſigh for the tooth-ach.

Leon. Where is but a humour or a worme.

Bene. Wel, euery one cannot maſter a griefe, but he that has it.

Clau. Yet ſay I, he is in loue.

Prince There is no appearance of fancie in him, vnleſſe it be a fancy that he hath to ſtrange diſguiſes, as to be a Dutch-man to day, a French-man to morrow, or in the ſhape of two countries at once, as a Germaine from the waſte downward, all ſlops, and a Spaniard from the hip vpward, no dublet: vnleſſe he haue a fancie to this foolery, as it appeares he hath, he is no foole for fancy, as you would haue it appeare he is.

Clau.

Clau. If he be not in loue with ſome woman, there is no beleeuing old ſignes, a bruſhes his hat a mornings, what ſhould that bode?

Prince Hath any man ſeene him at the Barbers?

Clau. No, but the barbers man hath bin ſeene with him, and the olde ornament of his cheeke hath already ſtufft tennis balls.

Leon. Indeed he lookes yonger than he did, by the loſſe of a beard.

Prince Nay a rubs himſelfe with ciuit, can you ſmell him out by that?

Claud. Thats as much as to ſay, the ſweete youthe's in loue.

Bene. The greateſt note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he woont to waſh his face?

Prince Yea or to paint himſelfe? for the which I heare what they ſay of him.

Claud. Nay but his ieſting ſpirit, which is now crept into a lute-ſtring, and now gouernd by ſtops.

Prince Indeed that tells a heauy tale for him: conclude, conclude, he is in loue.

Claud. Nay but I know who loues him.

Prince That would I know too, I warrant one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions, and in diſpight of al, dies for him.

Prince She ſhall be buried with her face vpwards.

Bene. Yet is this no charme for the tooth-ake, old ſignior, walke aſide with me, I haue ſtudied eight or nine wiſe wordes to ſpeake to you, which theſe hobby-horſes muſt not heare.

Prince For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

Claud. Tis euen ſo, Hero and Margaret haue by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two beares will not bite one another when they meete.

Enter Iohn the Baſtard.

Baſtard My lord and brother, God ſaue you.

Prince Good den brother.

Baſtard If your leiſure ſeru'd, I would ſpeake with you.

Prince In priuate?

Baſtard If it pleaſe you, yet Count Claudio may heare, for what I would ſpeake of, concernes him.

Prince Whats the matter?

Baſt. Meanes your Lordſhip to be married to morrow?

Prince You know he does.

Baſt. I know not that when he knowes what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you diſcouer it.

Baſt. You may think I loue you not, let that appeare hereafter, and ayme better at me by that I now will manifeſt, for my brother (I thinke, he holdes you well, and in deareneſſe of heart) hath holpe to effect your enſuing mariage: ſurely ſute ill ſpent, and labor ill beſtowed.

Prince Why whats the matter?

Baſt. I came hither to tel you, and circumſtances ſhortned, (for ſhe has bin too long a talking of) the lady is diſloyall.

Clau. Who Hero?

Baſtar. Euen ſhe, Leonatoes Hero, your Hero, euery mans Hero.

Clau. Diſloyall?

Baſt. The word is too good to paint out her wickedneſſe, I could ſay ſhe were worſe, thinke you of a worſe title, and I wil fit her to it: wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to night you ſhall ſee her chamber window entred, euen the night before her wedding day, if you loue her, then to morow wed her: But it would better fitte your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be ſo?

Prince I wil not thinke it.

Baſt. If you dare not truſt that you ſee, confeſſe not that you knowe: if you will follow mee, I will ſhew you enough, and when you haue ſeene more, and heard more, proceede accordingly.

Claudio If I ſee anie thing to night, why I ſhould not marry her to morrow in the congregation, where I ſhould wed, there will I ſhame her.

Prince

Prince And as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I wil ioyne with thee, to diſgrace her.

Baſtard I will diſparage her no farther, till you are my witneſſes, beare it coldely but till midnight, and let the iſſue ſhew it ſelfe. 132 †

Prince O day vntowardly turned!

Claud. O miſchiefe ſtrangely thwarting!

Baſtard O plague right well preuented! ſo will you ſay, when you haue ſeene the ſequele. 136

Enter Dogbery and his compartner with the Watch. III.iii.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verges Yea, or elſe it were pitty but they ſhould ſuffer ſaluation body and ſoule.

Dog. Nay, that were a puniſhment too good for them, if they ſhould haue any allegeance in them, being choſen for the Princes watch. 4

Verges Well, giue them their charge, neighbour Dogbery. 8

Dogbery Firſt, who thinke you the moſt deſartleſſe man to be Conſtable?

Watch 1 Hugh Ote-cake ſir, or George Sea-cole, for they can write and reade. 12

Dogbery Come hither neighbor Sea-cole. God hath bleſt you with a good name: to be a welfauoured man, is the gift of Fortune, but to write and reade, comes by nature. 16

Watch 2 Both which maiſter Conſtable.

Dogbery You haue: I knew it would be your anſwer: wel, for your fauour ſir, why giue God thanks, and make no boaſt of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appeere when there is no neede of ſuch vanity, you are thought heere to be the moſt ſenſleſſe and fit man for the Conſtable of the watch: therefore beare you the lanthorne: this is your charge, You ſhall comprehend all vagrom men, you are to bidde any man ſtand, in the Princes name. 20 24

Watch 2 How if a will not ſtand? 28

Dogbery Why then take no note of him, but let him goe,

and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thanke god you are ridde of a knaue.

Verges If he wil not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Princes subiects.

Dogbery True, and they are to meddle with none but the Princes subiects: you shall also make no noise in the streetes: for, for the watch to babble and to talke, is most tollerable, and not to be indured.

Watch We will rather sleepe than talke, we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogbery Why you speake like an antient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: onely haue a care that your billes bee not stolne: well, you are to cal at al the alehouses, and bid those that are drunke get them to bed.

Watch How if they will not?

Dogbery Why then let them alone til they are sober, if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you tooke them for.

Watch Well sir.

Dogbery If you meete a thiefe, you may suspect him, by vertue of your office, to be no true man: and for such kind of men, the lesse you meddle or make with them, why the more is for your honesty.

Watch If we know him to be a thiefe, shal we not lay hands on him?

Dogbery Truely by your office you may, but I thinke they that touch pitch will be defilde: the most peaceable way for you, if you doe take a thiefe, is, to let him shew himselfe what he is, and steale out of your companie.

Verges You haue beene alwayes called a mercifull manne, partner.

Dog. Truely I would not hang a dogge by my will, much more a man who hath anie honestie in him.

Verges If you heare a child crie in the night you must call to the nurse and bid her stil it.

Watch How if the nurse be asleepe and will not heare vs.

Dog.

Dog. Why then depart in peace,and let the child wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not heare her lamb when it baes,will neuer anſwer a calfe when he bleates.

Verges Tis very true.

Dog. This is the end of the charge: you conſtable are to preſent the princes owne perſon,if you meete the prince in the night,you may ſtay him.

Verges Nay birlady that I thinke a cannot.

Dog. Fiue ſhillings to one on't with any man that knowes the ſtatutes,he may ſtay him, mary not without the prince be willing,for indeed the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to ſtay a man againſt his will.

Verges Birlady I thinke it be ſo.

Dog. Ha ah ha, wel maſters good night, and there be any matter of weight chaunces, cal vp me, keepe your fellowes counſailes, and your owne, and good night, come neighbour.

Watch Well maſters, we heare our charge, let vs goe ſitte here vppon the church bench till twoo, and then all to bed.

Dog. One word more,honeſt neighbors,I pray you watch about ſignior Leonatoes doore,for the wedding being there to morrow, there is a great coyle to night,adiew,be vigitant I beſeech you. *exeunt.*

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bor. What Conrade?

Watch Peace, ſtir not.

Bor. Conrade I ſay.

Con. Here man,I am at thy elbow.

Bor. Mas and my elbow itcht, I thought there would a ſcabbe follow.

Con. I will owe thee an anſwer for that, and now forward with thy tale.

Bor. Stand thee cloſe then vnder this penthouſe, for it driſſells raine, and I will, like a true drunckard, vtter all to thee.

Watch Some treaſon maſters,yet ſtand cloſe.

Bor.

Bor. Therefore know, I haue earned of Dun Iohn a thouſand ducates.

Con. Is it poſſible that any villanie ſhould be ſo deare?

Bor. Thou ſhouldſt rather aske if it were poſſible any villanie ſhuld be ſo rich? for when rich villains haue need of poor ones, poore ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bor. That ſhewes thou art vnconfirm'd, thou knoweſt that the faſhion of a dublet, or a hat, or a cloake, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes it is apparell.

Bor. I meane the faſhion.

Con. Yes the faſhion is the faſhion.

Bor. Tuſh, I may as well ſay the foole's the foole, but ſeeſt thou not what a deformed theefe this faſhion is?

Watch I know that deformed, a has bin a vile theefe, this vij. yeere, a goes vp and downe like a gentle man: I remember his name.

Bor. Didſt thou not heare ſome body?

Con. No, twas the vane on the houſe.

Bor. Seeſt thou not (I ſay) what a deformed thiefe this faſhion is, how giddily a turnes about all the Hot-blouds, between foureteene and fiue and thirtie, ſometimes faſhioning them like Pharaoes ſouldiours in the rechie painting, ſometime like god Bels prieſts in the old church window, ſometime like the ſhauen Hercules in the ſmircht worm-eaten tapeſtry, where his cod-peece ſeemes as maſſie as his club.

Con. Al this I ſee, and I ſee that the faſhion weares out more apparrell then the man. but art not thou thy ſelfe giddy with the faſhion too, that thou haſt ſhifted out of thy tale into telling me of the faſhion?

Bor. Not ſo neither, but know that I haue to night wooed Margaret the Lady Heroes gentle-woman, by the name of Hero, ſhe leanes me out at her miſtris chamber window, bids me a thouſand times good night: I tell this tale vildly, I ſhould firſt tel thee how the prince Claudio and my maſter planted, and placed, and poſſeſſed, by my maſter Don Iohn, ſaw a farre

off

off in the orchard this amiable incounter.

Conr. And thought they Margaret was Hero?

Bar. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the diuel my maſter knew ſhe was Margaret, and partly by his oths. which firſt poſſeſt them, partly by the darke night which did deceiue them, but chiefely, by my villany, which did confirme any ſlander that Don Iohn had made, away went Claudio enragde, ſwore he would meet her as he was apointed next morning at the Temple, and there, before the whole congregation ſhame her, with what he ſaw o're night, and ſend her home againe without a husband.

Watch 1 We charge you in the princes name ſtand.

Watch 2 Call vppe the right maiſter Conſtable, wee haue here recouerd the moſt dangerous peece of lechery, that euer was knowne in the common wealth.

Watch 1 And one Deformed is one of them, I know him, a weares a locke.

Conr Maſters, maſters.

Watch 2 Youle be made bring deformed forth I warrant you.

Conr Maſters, neuer ſpeake, we charge you, let vs obey you to go with vs.

Bor. We are like to proue a goodly commoditie, being taken vp of theſe mens billes.

Conr. A commodity in queſtion I warrant you, come weele obey you. *exeunt.*

Enter Hero, and Margaret, and Vrſula. III.iv.

Hero Good Vrſula wake my coſin Beatrice, and deſire her to riſe.

Vrſula I wil lady.

Hero And bid her come hither.

Vrſula Well.

Marg. Troth I thinke your other rebato were better.

Hero No pray thee good Meg, ile weare this.

Marg. By my troth's not ſo good, and I warrant your coſin will ſay ſo.

Hero My coſin's a foole, and thou art another, ile weare

none but this.

Mar I like the new tire within excelently,if the haire were a thought browner:and your gown's a moſt rare faſhion yfaith.

I ſaw the Dutcheſſe of Millaines gowne that they praiſe ſo.

Hero O that exceedes they ſay.

Marg. By my troth's but a night-gown it reſpect of yours, cloth a gold and cuts, and lac'd with ſiluer, ſet with pearles, downe ſleeues,ſide ſleeues,and skirts,round vnderborne with a blewiſh tinſell, but for a fine queint graceful and excelent faſhion,yours is worth ten on't.

Hero God giue me ioy to weare it, for my heart is exceeding heauy.

Marg. T'will be heauier ſoone by the weight of a man.

Hero Fie vpon thee,art not aſhamed?

Marg. Of what lady?of ſpeaking honourably?is not marriage honourable in a beggar? is not your Lord honourable without mariage?I thinke you would haue me ſay,ſauing your reuerence a husband: & bad thinking do not wreſt true ſpeaking,ile offend no body, is there any harm in the heauier, for a husband? none I thinke, and it be the right husband,and the right wife,otherwiſe tis light and not heauy,aske my lady Beatrice els,here ſhe comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero Good morrow coze.

Beat. Good morrow ſweete Hero.

Hero Why how now?do you ſpeake in the ſicke tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune,me thinkes.

Mar Clap's into Light a loue,(that goes without a burden,) do you ſing it,and ile daunce it.

Beat. Ye Light aloue with your heels,then if your husband haue ſtables enough youle ſee he ſhall lacke no barnes.

Mar. O illegitimate conſtruction! I ſcorne that with my heeles.

Beat. Tis almoſt fiue a cloeke coſin, tis time you were ready,by my troth I am exceeding ill,hey ho.

Mar. For a hauke,a horſe,or a husband?

Beat.

Beat. For the letter that begins them al, H.

Mar. Wel, and you be not turnde Turke, theres no more ſayling by the ſtarre.

Beat. What meanes the foole trow?

Mar. Nothing I, but God ſend euery one their hearts deſire.

Hero Theſe gloues the Counte ſent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am ſtuft coſin, I cannot ſmell.

Mar. A maide and ſtuft! theres goodly catching of colde.

Beat. O God help me, God help me, how long haue you profeſt apprehenſion?

Mar. Euer ſince you left it, doth not my wit become me rarely?

Beat. It is not ſeene enough, you ſhould weare it in your cap, by my troth I am ſicke.

Mar. Get you ſome of this diſtill'd *cardus benedictus*, and lay it to your heart, it is the onely thing for a qualme.

Hero There thou prickſt her with a thiſtel.

Beat. Benedictus, why *benedictus*? you haue ſome moral in this *benedictus*.

Mar. Morall? no by my troth I haue no morall meaning, I meant plaine holy thiſtel, you may thinke perchaunce that I think you are in loue, nay birlady I am not ſuch a foole to think what I liſt, nor I liſt not to thinke what I can, nor indeed I can not think, if I would thinke my heart out of thinking, that you are in loue, or that you will be in loue, or that you can be in loue: yet Benedicke was ſuch another and now is he become a man, he ſwore he would neuer marry, and yet now in diſpight of his heart he eates his meate without grudging, and how you may be conuerted I know not, but me thinkes you looke with your eies as other women do.

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keepes?

Marg. Not a falſe gallop. *Enter Vrſula.*

Vrſula Madame withdraw, the prince, the Count, ſignior Benedicke, Don Iohn, and all the gallants of the towne are

come to fetch you to church.

Hero Help to dreſſe me good coze, good Meg, good Vrſula.

III.v. *Enter Leonato, and the Conſtable, and the Headborough.*

Leonato What would you with me, honeſt neighbour?

Conſt.Dog. Mary ſir I would haue ſome confidence with you, that decernes you nearely.

Leonato Briefe I pray you, for you ſee it is a buſie time with me.

Conſt Dog. Mary this it is ſir.

Headb. Yes in truth it is ſir.

Leonato What is it my good friends?

Con.Do. Goodman Verges ſir ſpeaks a little of the matter, an old man ſir, and his wittes are not ſo blunt, as God helpe I would deſire they were, but infaith honeſt, as the skin between his browes.

Head. Yes I thank God, I am as honeſt as any man liuing, that is an old man, and no honeſter then I.

Conſt.Dog. Compariſons are odorous, palabras, neighbour Verges.

Leonato Neighbors, you are tedious.

Conſt.Dog. It pleaſes your worſhip to ſay ſo, but we are the poore Dukes officers, but truly for mine owne part if I were as tedious as a King I could find in my heart to beſtow it all of your worſhip.

Leonato All thy tediouſneſſe on me, ah?

Conſt.Dog. Yea, and 't twere a thouſand pound more than tis, for I heare as good exclamation on your worſhippe as of any man in the citie, and though I be but a poore man, I am glad to heare it.

Head. And ſo am I.

Leonato I would faine know what you haue to ſay.

Head. Mary ſir our watch to night, excepting your worſhips preſence, ha tane a couple of as arrant knaues as any in Meſſina.

Conſt.Dog. A good old man ſir, he will be talking as they ſay, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help vs, it is a world

to

III.v.

to ſee: well ſaid yfaith neighbour Verges, well, God's a good man,and two men ride of a horſe,one muſt ride behind,an honeſt ſoule yfaith ſir,by my troth he is,as euer broke bread,but God is to be worſhipt, all men are not alike, alas good neighbour.

Leonato Indeed neighbour he comes too ſhort of you.

Conſt.Do. Gifts that God giues.

Leonato I muſt leaue you.

Conſt.Dog. One word ſir, our watch ſir haue indeede comprehended two aſpitious perſons, and wee woulde haue them this morning examined before your worſhip.

Leonato Take their examination your ſelfe,and bring it me, I am now in great haſte,as it may appeare vnto you.

Conſtable It ſhall be ſuffigance. (*exit*

Leonato Drinke ſome wine ere you goe : fare you well.

Meſſenger My lord, they ſtay for you,to giue your daughter to her husband.

Leon. Ile wait vpon them, I am ready.

Dogb. Go good partner, goe get you to Francis Sea-cole, bid him bring his penne and inckehorne to the Gaole: we are now to examination theſe men.

Verges And we muſt do it wiſely.

Dogbery We will ſpare for no witte I warrant you : heeres that ſhall driue ſome of them to a noncome, only get the learned writer to ſet downe our excommunication, and meet me at the Iaile.

Enter Prince,Baſtard,Leonato,Frier, Claudio,Benedicke,Hero,and Beatrice.

IV.i.

Leonato Come Frier Francis.be briefe, onely to the plaine forme of marriage, and you ſhall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Fran. You come hither,my lord,to marry this lady.

Claudio No.

Leo To bee married to her : Frier,you come to marry her.

Frier Lady, you come hither to be married to this counte.

Hero I do.

Frier If either of you know any inward impediment why

you ſhould not be conioyned, I charge you on your ſoules to vtter it.

Claudio Know you any, Hero?

Hero None my lord.

Frier Know you any, Counte?

Leonato I dare make his anſwer, None.

Clau. O what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do, not knowing what they do!

Bene. Howe nowe! interiections? why then, ſome be of laughing, as, ah, ha, he.

Claudio Stand thee by Frier, father, by your leaue,
Will you with free and vnconſtrained ſoule
Giue me this maide your daughter?

Leonato As freely ſonne as God did giue her mee.

Claudio And what haue I to giue you backe whoſe woorth
May counterpoiſe this rich and pretious gift?

Princn Nothing, vnleſſe you render her againe.

Claudio Sweete Prince, you learne me noble thankfulnes:
There Leonato, take her backe againe,
Giue not this rotten orenge to your friend,
Shee's but the ſigne and ſemblance of her honor:
Behold how like a maide ſhe bluſhes heere!
O what authoritie and ſhew of truth
Can cunning ſinne couer it ſelfe withall!
Comes not that blood, as modeſt euidence,
To witneſſe ſimple Vertue? would you not ſweare
All you that ſee her, that ſhe were a maide,
By theſe exterior ſhewes? But ſhe is none:
She knowes the heate of a luxurious bed:
Her bluſh is guiltineſſe, not modeſtie.

Leonato What do you meane my lord?

Claudio Not to be married,
Not to knit my ſoule to an approoued wanton.

Leonato Deere my lord, if you in your owne proofe,
Haue vanquiſht the reſiſtance of her youth,
And made defeate of her virginitie.

Claudio I know what you would ſay: if I haue knowne her,

You

You will ſay, ſhe did imbrace me as a husband,
And ſo extenuate the forehand ſinne: No Leonato,
I neuer tempted her with word too large,
But as a brother to his ſiſter, ſhewed
Baſhfull ſinceritie, and comelie loue.
Hero And ſeemde I euer otherwiſe to you?
Claudio Out on thee ſeeming, I wil write againſt it,
You ſeeme to me as Diane in her Orbe,
As chaſte as is the budde ere it be blowne:
But you are more intemperate in your blood,
Than Venus, or thoſe pampred animalls,
That rage in ſauage ſenſualitie.
Hero Is my Lord well that he doth ſpeake ſo wide?
Leonato Sweete prince, why ſpeake not you?
Prince What ſhould I ſpeake?
I ſtand diſhonourd that haue gone about,
To lincke my deare friend to a common ſtale.
Leonato Are theſe things ſpoken, or do I but dreame?
Baſtard Sir, they are ſpoken, and theſe things are true.
Bened. This lookes not like a nuptiall.
Hero True, O God!
Claud. Leonato, ſtand I here?
Is this the prince? is this the princes brother?
Is this face Heroes? are our eies our owne?
Leonato All this is ſo, but what of this my Lord?
Claud. Let me but moue one queſtion to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power,
That you haue in her, bid her anſwer truly.
Leonato I charge thee do ſo, as thou art my child.
Hero O God defend me how am I beſet,
What kind of catechiſing call you this?
Claud. To make you anſwer truly to your name.
Hero Is it not Hero, who can blot that name
With any iuſt reproch?
Claud. Mary that can Hero,
Hero it ſelfe can blot out Heroes vertue.
What man was he talkt with you yeſternight,
Out at your window betwixt twelue and one? Now

Now if you are a maide, anſwer to this.
Hero I talkt with no man at that howre my lord.
Prince Why then are you no maiden. Leonato,
I am ſory you muſt heare: vpon mine honor,
My ſelfe, my brother, and this grieued Counte
Did ſee her, heare her, at that howre laſt night,
Talke with a ruffian at her chamber window,
Who hath indeede moſt like a liberall villaine,
Confeſt the vile encounters they haue had
A thouſand times in ſecret.
Iohn Fie, fie, they are not to be named my lord,
Not to be ſpoke of,
There is not chaſtitie enough in language,
Without offence to vtter them: thus pretty lady,
I am ſory for thy much miſgouernement.
Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hadſt thou bin,
If halfe thy outward graces had bin placed,
About thy thoughts and counſailes of thy heart?
But fare thee well, moſt foule, moſt faire, farewell
Thou pure impietie, and impious puritie,
For thee ile locke vp all the gates of Loue,
And on my eie-liddes ſhall Conieƈture hang,
To turne all beautie into thoughts of harme,
And neuer ſhall it more be gracious.
Leonato Hath no mans dagger here a point for me.
Beatrice Why how now coſin, wherfore ſinke you down?
Baſtard Come let vs go: theſe things come thus to light,
Smother her ſpirits vp.
Benedicke How doth the Lady?
Beatrice Dead I thinke, help vncle,
Hero, why Hero, vncle, ſignior Benedicke, Frier.
Leonato O Fate! take not away thy heauy hand,
Death is the faireſt couer for her ſhame
That may be wiſht for.
Beatrice How now coſin Hero?
Frier Haue comfort lady.
Leonato Doſt thou looke vp?

Frier

Frier Yea,wherefore ſhould ſhe not?
Leonato Wherfore? why doth not euery earthly thing,
Cry ſhame vpon her?could ſhe here deny
The ſtory that is printed in her bloud?
Do not liue Hero,do not ope thine eies:
For did I thinke thou wouldſt not quickly die,
Thought I thy ſpirites were ſtronger than thy ſhames,
My ſelfe would on the rereward of reproches
Strike at thy life. Grieued I I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugall Natures frame?
O one too much by thee:why had I one?
Why euer waſt thou louely in my eies?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Tooke vp a beggars iſſue at my gates,
Who ſmirched thus,and mired with infamy,
I might haue ſaid,no part of it is mine,
This ſhame deriues it ſelfe from vnknowne loynes,
But mine and mine I loued,and mine I praiſde,
And mine that I was prowd on mine ſo much,
That I my ſelfe,was to my ſelfe not mine:
Valewing of her,why ſhe,O ſhe is falne,
Into a pit of incke, that the wide ſea
Hath drops too few to waſh her cleane againe,
And ſalt too little,which may ſeaſon giue
To her foule tainted fleſh.
Ben. Sir,ſir,be patient,for my part I am ſo attired in wonder, I know not what to ſay.
Beat. O on my ſoule my coſin is belied.
Bene. Lady,were you her bedfellow laſt night?
Beat. No truly,not although vntill laſt night,
I haue this twelue month bin her bedfellow.
Leon. Confirmd,confirmd,O that is ſtronger made,
Which was before bard vp with ribs of yron,
Would the two princes lie,and Claudio lie,
Who loued her ſo,that ſpeaking of her foulneſſe,
Waſht it with teares?hence from her,let her die.
Frier Heare me a little,for I haue only bin ſilent ſo long,& giuen way vnto this courſe of fortune, by noting of the lady,I haue markt,

A thouſand bluſhing apparitions,
To ſtart into her face, a thouſand innocent ſhames,
In angel whiteneſſe beate away thoſe bluſhes,
And in her eie there hath appeard a fire,
To burne the errors that theſe princes hold
Againſt her maiden truth: call me a foole,
Truſt not my reading, nor my obſeruations,
Which with experimental ſeale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: truſt not my age,
My reuerence, calling, nor diuinitie,
If this ſweete ladie lie not guiltleſſe here,
Vnder ſome biting errour.
Leonato Frier, it cannot be,
Thou ſeeſt that all the grace that ſhe hath left,
Is, that ſhe will not adde to her damnation,
A ſinne of periury, ſhe not denies it:
Why ſeekſt thou then to couer with excuſe,
That which appeares in proper nakedneſſe?
Frier Lady, what man is he you are accuſde of?
Hero They know that do accuſe me, I know none,
If I know more of any man aliue
Then that which maiden modeſty doth warrant,
Let all my ſinnes lacke mercie, O my father,
Proue you that any man with me conuerſt,
At houres vnmeete, or that I yeſternight
Maintaind the change of words with any creature,
Refuſe me, hate me, torture me to death.
Frier There is ſome ſtrange miſpriſion in the princes.
Bene. Two of them haue the very bent of honour,
And if their wiſedomes be miſled in this,
The practiſe of it liues in Iohn the Baſtard,
Whoſe ſpirites toyle in frame of villanies.
Leonato I know not, if they ſpeake but truth of her,
Theſe hands ſhall teare her, if they wrong her honour,
The prowdeſt of them ſhal wel heare of it.
Time hath not yet ſo dried this bloud of mine,
Nor age ſo eate vp my inuention,

Nor

Nor Fortune made ſuch hauocke of my meanes,
Nor my bad life reft me ſo much of friends,
But they ſhall find awakte in ſuch a kind,
Both ſtrength of limbe, and policy of mind,
Ability in meanes, and choiſe of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.
Frier Pawſe awhile,
And let my counſell ſway you in this caſe,
Your daughter here the princeſſe (left for dead,)
Let her awhile be ſecretly kept in,
And publiſh it, that ſhe is dead indeede,
Maintaine a mourning oſtentation,
And on your families old monument,
Hang mourneful epitaphes, and do all rites,
That appertaine vnto a buriall.
Leon. What ſhall become of this? what will this do?
Frier Mary this well caried, ſhall on her behalfe,,
Change ſlaunder to remorſe, that is ſome good,
But not for that dreame I on this ſtrange courſe,
But on this trauaile looke for greater birth:
She dying, as it muſt be ſo maintaind,
Vpon the inſtant that ſhe was accuſde,
Shal be lamented, pittied, and excuſde
Of euery hearer: for it ſo falls out,
That what we haue, we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enioy it, but being lackt and loſt,
Why then we racke the valew, then we find
The vertue that poſſeſſion would not ſhew vs
Whiles it was ours, ſo will it fare with Claudio:
When hee ſhall heare ſhe died vpon his words,
Th Idæa of her life ſhall ſweetly creepe,
Into his ſtudy of imagination,
And euery louely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparelld in more precious habite,
More moouing delicate, and full of life,
Into the eie and proſpect of his ſoule
Then when ſhe liude indeed: then ſhall he mourne,

If euer loue had intereſt in his liuer,
And wiſh he had not ſo accuſed her:
No, though he thought his accuſation true:
Let this be ſo, and doubt not but ſucceſſe
Will faſhion the euent in better ſhape,
Then I can lay it downe in likelihood.
But if all ayme but this be leuelld falſe,
The ſuppoſition of the ladies death,
Will quench the wonder of her infamie.
And if it ſort not wel, you may conceale her,
As beſt befits her wounded reputation,
In ſome recluſiue and religious life,
Out of all eies, tongues, minds, and iniuries.
Bene. Signior Leonato, let the Frier aduiſe you,
And though you know my inwardneſſe and loue
Is very much vnto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honor, I will deale in this,
As ſecretly and iuſtly as your ſoule
Should with your body.
Leon. Being that I flow in griefe,
The ſmalleſt twine may leade me.
Frier 'Tis wel conſented, preſently away,
For to ſtrange ſores, ſtrangely they ſtraine the cure,
Come lady, die to liue, this wedding day
Perhaps is but prolong'd, haue patience and endure. *exit.*
Bene. Lady Beatrice, haue you wept al this while?
Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.
Bene. I will not deſire that.
Beat. You haue no reaſon, I do it freely.
Bene. Surely I do beleeue your faire coſin is wronged.
Beat. Ah, how much might the man deſerue of me that would right her!
Bene. Is there any way to ſhew ſuch friendſhip?
Beat. A very euen way, but no ſuch friend.
Bene. May a man do it?
Beat. It is a mans office, but not yours.
Bene. I doe loue nothing in the worlde ſo well as you,

is

is not that ſtrange?

Beat. As ſtrange as the thing I knowe not, it were as poſſible for me to ſay, I loued nothing ſo wel as you, but beleue me not, and yet I lie not, I confeſſe nothing, nor I deny nothing, I am ſory for my cooſin.

Bened. By my ſword Beatrice, thou loueſt me.

Beat. Do not ſweare and eate it. †

Bened. I will ſweare by it that you loue me, and I wil make him eate it that ſayes I loue not you.

Beat. Will you not eate your word?

Bened. With no ſawce that can be deuiſed to it, I proteſt I loue thee.

Beat. Why then God forgiue me.

Bened. What offence ſweete Beatrice?

Beat. You haue ſtayed me in a happy houre, I was about to proteſt I loued you.

Bened. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I loue you with ſo much of my heart, that none is left to proteſt.

Bened. Come bid me doe any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bened. Ha, not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it, farewell. †

Bened. Tarry ſweete Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here, there is no loue in you, nay I pray you let me go.

Bened. Beatrice.

Beat. In faith I will go.

Bened. Weele be friends firſt.

Beat. You dare eaſier be friends with mee, than fight with mine enemy.

Bened. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is a not approoued in the height a villaine, that hath ſlaundered, ſcorned, diſhonored my kinſwoman? O that I were a man! what, beare her in hand, vntill they come to take handes, and then with publike accuſation vncouerd ſlaunder, vnmittigated rancour? O God that I were a man! I woulde

IV.i.

eate his heart in the market place.

Bened. Heare me Beatrice.

Beat. Talke with a man out at a window, a proper saying.

Bened. Nay but Beatrice.

Beat. Sweete Hero, she is wrongd, she is slaundred, shee is vndone.

Bened. Beat?

Beat. Princes and Counties! surely a princely testimonie, a goodly Counte, Counte Comfect, a sweete Gallant surely, O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend woulde be a man for my sake! But manhoode is melted into curtsies, valour into complement, and men are only turnd into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tels a lie, and sweares it: I cannot be a man with wishing, therfore I will die a woman with grieuing.

Bened. Tarry good Beatrice, by this hand I loue thee.

Beatrice Vse it for my loue some other way than swearing by it.

Bened. Thinke you in your soule the Count Claudio hath wrongd Hero?

Beatrice Yea, as sure as I haue a thought, or a soule.

Bened. Enough, I am engagde, I will challenge him, I will kisse your hand, and so I leaue you: by this hand, Claudio shal render me a deere account: as you heare of me, so think of me: goe comforte your cosin, I must say she is dead, and so farewell.

IV.ii.

Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne clearke in gownes.

Keeper Is our whole dissembly appeard?

Cowley O a stoole and a cushion for the Sexton.

Sexton Which be the malefactors?

Andrew Mary that am I, and my partner.

Cowley Nay thats certaine, we haue the exhibition to examine.

Sexton But which are the offenders? that are to be examined, let them come before maister constable.

Kemp Yea mary, let them come before mee, what is your name,

name,friend?

Bor. Borachio.

Ke. Pray write downe Borachio. Yours ſirra.

Con. I am a gentleman ſir,and my name is Conrade.

Ke. Write downe maiſter gentleman Conrade: maiſters, do you ſerue God?

Both Yea ſir we hope.

Kem. Write downe, that they hope they ſerue God: and write God firſt,for God defend but God ſhould goe before ſuch villaines: maiſters,it is prooued alreadie that you are little better than falſe knaues, and it will go neere to be thought ſo ſhortly, how anſwer you for your ſelues?

Con. Mary ſir we ſay,we are none.

Kemp A maruellous witty fellowe I aſſure you, but I will go about with him: come you hither ſirra, a word in your eare ſir,I ſay to you, it is thought you are falſe knaues.

Bor. Sir,I ſay to you, we are none.

Kemp Well,ſtand aſide, fore God they are both in a tale: haue you writ downe,that they are none?

Sexton Maſter conſtable, you go not the way to examine, you muſt call foorth the watch that are their accuſers.

Kemp Yea mary, thats the eſteſt way, let the watch come forth: maſters, I charge you in the Princes name accuſe theſe men.

Watch 1 This man ſaid ſir,that don Iohn the Princes brother was a villaine.

Kemp Write downe,prince Iohn a villaine: why this is flat periurie,to call a Princes brother villaine.

Borachio Maiſter Conſtable.

Kemp Pray thee fellowe peace, I doe not like thy looke I promiſe thee.

Sexton What heard you him ſay elſe?

Watch 2 Mary that he had receiued a thouſand duckats of don Iohn, for accuſing the Ladie Hero wrongfully.

Kemp Flat burglarie as euer was committed.

Conſt. Yea by maſſe that it is.

Sexton What elſe fellow?

Watch

Watch I And that Counte Claudio did meane vppon his
wordes, to diſgrace Hero before the whole aſſemblie, and not
marrie her.

Kemp O villaine! thou wilt be condemnd into euerlaſting
redemption for this.

Sexton VVhat elſe? *Watch* This is all.

Sexton And this is more maſters then you can deny, prince
Iohn is this morning ſecretlie ſtolne awaie: Hero was in this
manner accuſde, in this verie manner refuſde, and vppon the
griefe of this ſodainlie died: Maiſter Conſtable, let theſe men
be bound, and brought to Leonatoes, I will goe before and
ſhew him their examination.

Conſtable Come let them be opiniond.

Couley Let them be in the hands of Coxcombe.

Kemp Gods my life, wheres the Sexton? let him write down
the Princes officer Coxcombe: come, bind them, thou naugh-
ty varlet.

Couley Away, you are an aſſe, you are an aſſe.

Kemp Dooſt thou not ſuſpect my place? dooſt thou not
ſuſpect my yeeres? O that he were here to write me downe an
aſſe! but maiſters, remember that I am an aſſe, though it bee
not written downe, yet forget not that I am an aſſe: No thou
villaine, thou art full of pietie as ſhal be prou'de vpon thee by
good witnes, I am a wiſe fellow, and which is more, an officer,
and which is more, a houſholder, and which is more, as pret-
ty a peece of fleſh as anie is in Meſſina, and one that knowes
the Law, goe to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow
that hath had loſſes, and one that hath two gownes, and euery
thing hanſome about him: bring him away: O that I had bin
writ downe an aſſe! *exit.*

V.i. *Enter Leonato and his brother.*

Brother If you go on thus, you will kill your ſelfe,
And tis not wiſedome thus to ſecond griefe,
Againſt your ſelfe.

Leonato I pray thee ceaſe thy counſaile,
Which falles into mine eares as profitleſſe,
As water in a ſyue: giue not me counſaile,

Nor

Nor let no comforter delight mine eare,
But ſuch a one whoſe wrongs doe ſute with mine.
Bring me a father that ſo lou'd his child,
Whoſe ioy of her is ouer-whelmd like mine,
And bid him ſpeake of patience,
Meaſure his woe the length and bredth of mine,
And let it anſwer euery ſtraine for ſtraine,
As thus for thus, and ſuch a griefe for ſuch,
In euery lineament, branch, ſhape, and forme:
If ſuch a one will ſmile and ſtroke his beard,
And ſorrow, wagge, crie hem, when he ſhould grone,
Patch griefe with prouerbes, make misfortune drunke,
With candle-waſters: bring him yet to me,
And I of him will gather patience:
But there is no ſuch man, for brother, men
Can counſaile and ſpeake comfort to that griefe,
Which they themſelues not feele, but taſting it,
Their counſaile turnes to paſſion, which before,
Would giue preceptiall medcine to rage,
Fetter ſtrong madneſſe in a ſilken thred,
Charme ach with ayre, and agony with words,
No, no, tis all mens office, to ſpeake patience
To thoſe that wring vnder the loade of ſorrow
But no mans vertue nor ſufficiencie
To be ſo morall, when he ſhall endure
The like himſelfe: therefore giue me no counſaile,
My griefes crie lowder then aduertiſement.
Brother Therein do men from children nothing differ.
Leonato I pray thee peace, I wil be fleſh and bloud,
For there was neuer yet Philoſopher,
That could endure the tooth-ake patiently,
How euer they haue writ the ſtile of gods,
And made a puſh at chance and ſufferance.
Brother Yet bend not all the harme vpon your ſelfe,
Make thoſe that do offend you, ſuffer too.
Leonato There thou ſpeakſt reaſon, nay I will do ſo,
My ſoule doth tell me, Hero is belied,

And that ſhall Claudio know, ſo ſhall the prince,
And all of them that thus diſhonour her.

Enter Prince and Claudio.

Brother Here comes the Prince and Claudio haſtily.
Prince Good den, good den.
Claudio Good day to both of you.
Leonato Heare you my Lords?
Prince We haue ſome haſte Leonato.
Leonato Some haſte my lord! well, fare you well my lord,
Are you ſo haſty now? well, all is one.
Prince Nay do not quarrel with vs, good old man.
Brother If he could right himſelfe with quarrelling,
Some of vs would lie low.
Claudio Who wrongs him?
Leona. Mary thou doſt wrong me, thou diſſembler, thou:
Nay, neuer lay thy hand vpon thy ſword,
I feare thee not.
Claudio Mary beſhrew my hand,
If it ſhould giue your age ſuch cauſe of feare,
In faith my hand meant nothing to my ſword.
Leonato Tuſh, tuſh man, neuer fleere and ieſt at me,
I ſpeake not like a dotard, nor a foole,
As vnder priuiledge of age to bragge,
What I haue done being yong, or what would doe,
Were I not old, know Claudio to thy head,
Thou haſt ſo wrongd mine innocent child and me,
That I am forſt to lay my reuerence by,
And with grey haires and bruiſe of many daies,
Do challenge thee to triall of a man,
I ſay thou haſt belied mine innocent child.
Thy ſlander hath gone through and through her heart,
And ſhe lies buried with her anceſtors:
O in a toomb where neuer ſcandal ſlept,
Saue this of hers, framde by thy villanie.
Claudio My villany?
Leonato Thine Claudio, thine I ſay.
Prince You ſay not right old man.

Leonato

Leonato My Lord,my Lord,
Ile prooue it on his body if he dare,
Diſpight his nice fence, and his actiue practiſe,
His Maie of youth,and bloome of luſtihood.
Claudio Away,I will not haue to doe with you.
Leonato Canſt thou ſo daffe me?thou haſt kild my child,
If thou kilſt me,boy,thou ſhalt kill a man.
Brother He ſhal kill two of vs,and men indeed,
But thats no matter,let him kill one firſt:
Win me and weare me,let him anſwer me,
Come follow me boy,come ſir boy,come follow me
Sir boy,ile whip you from your foyning fence,
Nay,as I am a gentleman I,will.
Leonato Brother.
Brother Content your ſelf,God knowes,I loued my neece,
And ſhe is dead,ſlanderd to death by villaines,
That dare as well anſwer a man indeed,
As I dare take a ſerpent by the tongue.
Boyes,apes,braggarts,Iackes,milke-ſops.
Leonato Brother Anthony.
Brother Hold you content,what man!I know them,yea
And what they weigh,euen to the vtmoſt ſcruple,
Scambling,out-facing,faſhion-monging boies,
That lie,and cogge,and flout,deprave,and ſlaunder,
Go antiquely,and ſhew outward hidiouſneſſe,
And ſpeake of halfe a dozen dang'rous words,
How they might hurt their enemies,if they durſt,
And this is all.
Leonato But brother Anthonie
Brother Come tis no matter,
Do not you meddle,let me deale in this.
Prince Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience,
My heart is ſory for your daughters death:
But on my honour ſhe was chargde with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proofe.
Leonato My Lord,my Lord.
Prince I will not heare you.

Leo. No come brother,away, I wil be heard. *Exeunt amb.*
Bro. And ſhal, or ſome of vs wil ſmart for it. *Enter Ben.*
Prince See ſee,heere comes the man we went to ſeeke.
Claud. Now ſignior,what newes?
Bened. Good day my Lord:
Prince Welcome ſignior, you are almoſt come to parte almoſt a fray.
Claud. Wee had likt to haue had our two noſes ſnapt off with two old men without teeth.
Prince Leonato and his brother what thinkſt thou?had we fought,I doubt we ſhould haue beene too yong for them.
Bened. In a falſe quarrell there is no true valour, I came to ſeeke you both.
Claud. We haue beene vp and downe to ſeeke thee,for we are high proofe melancholie, and would faine haue it beaten away, wilt thou vſe thy wit?
Bened. It is in my ſcabberd, ſhal I drawe it?
Prince Doeſt thou weare thy wit by thy ſide?
Claud. Neuer any did ſo,though very many haue been beſide their wit, I will bid thee drawe,as wee doe the minſtrels, draw to pleaſure vs.
Prince As I am an honeſt man he lookes pale, art thou ſicke,or angry?
Claud. What courage man: what though care kild a catte, thou haſt mettle enough in thee to kill care.
Bened. Sir, I ſhall meete your wit in the careere, and you charge it againſt me, I pray you chuſe another ſubiect
Claud. Nay then giue him another ſtaffe,this laſt was broke croſſe.
Prince By this light he chaunges more and more, I thinke he be angry indeed.
Claud. If he be,he knowes how to turne his girdle.
Bened. Shall I ſpeake a word in your eare?
Claud. God bleſſe me from a challenge.
Bened. You are a villaine, I ieaſt not, I will make it good howe you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: doo mee right,or I will proteſt your cowardiſe: you haue killd a

ſweeete Lady, and her death ſhall fall heanie on you, let me heare from you.

Claud. Well I wil meet you, ſo I may haue good cheare.

Prince What, a feaſt, a feaſt?

Claud. I faith I thanke him he hath bid me to a calues head & a capon, the which if I doe not carue moſt curiouſly, ſay my kniffe's naught, ſhall I not find a woodcocke too?

Bened. Sir your wit ambles well, it goes eaſily.

Prince Ile tell thee how Beatrice praiſd thy witte the other day: I ſaid thou hadſt a fine witte, true ſaid ſhe, a fine little one: no ſaid I, a great wit: right ſaies ſhe, a great groſſe one: nay ſaid I, a good wit, iuſt ſaid ſhe, it hurts no body: nay ſaid I, the gentleman is wiſe: certaine ſaid ſhe, a wiſe gentleman: nay ſaid I, he hath the tongues: that I beleeue ſaid ſhee, for he ſwore a thing to mee on munday night, which hee forſwore on tueſday morning, theres a double tongue theirs two tongues, thus did ſhee an houre together tranſ-ſhape thy particular vertues, yet at laſt ſhe cõcluded with a ſigh, thou waſt the properſt man in Italy.

Claud. For the which ſhee wept heartily and ſaide ſhe cared not.

Prince Yea that ſhe did, but yet for all that, and if ſhe did not hate him deadly, ſhe would loue him dearely, the old mans daughter told vs all.

Claud. All all, and moreouer, God ſawe him when he was hid in the garden.

Prince But when ſhall we ſet the ſauage bulles hornes one the ſenſible Benedicks head?

Claud. Yea and text vnder-neath, here dwells Benedick the married man.

Bened. Fare you wel, boy, you know my minde, I wil leaue you now to your goſſep-like humor, you breake ieſts as braggards do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not: my Lord, for your many courtiſies I thanke you, I muſt diſcontinue your company, your brother the baſtard is fled from Meſſina: you haue among you, kild a ſweet and innocent lady: for my Lord Lacke-beard, there hee and I ſhal meet, and till then peace be with him,

Prince He is in earneſt.

Claudio In moſt profound earneſt, and ile warrant you, for the loue of Beatrice.

Prince And hath challengde thee.

Claudio Moſt ſincerely.

Prince What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his dublet and hoſe, and leaues off his wit!

Enter Conſtables, Conrade, and Borachio.

Claudio He is then a Giant to an Ape, but then is an Ape a Doctor to ſuch a man.

Prince But ſoft you, let me be, plucke vp my heart, and be ſad, did he not ſay my brother was fled?

Conſt. Come you ſir, if iuſtice cannot tame you, ſhe ſhall nere weigh more reaſons in her ballance, nay, and you be a curſing hypocrite once, you muſt be lookt to.

Prince How now, two of my brothers men bound? Borachio one.

Claudio Hearken after their offence my Lord.

Prince Officers, what offence haue theſe men done?

Conſt. Mary ſir, they haue committed falſe report, moreouer they haue ſpoken vntruths, ſecondarily they are ſlanders, ſixt and laſtly, they haue belyed a Lady, thirdly they haue verefied vniuſt thinges, and to conclude, they are lying knaues.

Prince. Firſt I aske thee what they haue done, thirdly I ask thee whats their offence, ſixt and laſtly why they are committed, and to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reaſoned, and in his owne diuiſion, and by my troth theres one meaning wel ſuted.

Prince Who haue you offended maiſters, that you are thus bound to your anſwere? this learned Conſtable is too cunning to be vnderſtood, whats your offence?

Bor. Sweete prince, let me goe no farther to mine anſwere: do you heare me, and let this Counte kill me: I haue deceiued euen your very eyes: what your wiſedoms could not diſcouer, theſe ſhallowe fooles haue broght to light, who in the night ouerheard me confeſſing to this man, how Don Iohn your brother incenſed me to ſlaunder the Lady Hero, howe you were brought

broughtinto the orchard,and ſaw me court Margaret in He-
roes garments,how you diſgracde hir when you ſhould marry
hir:my villany they haue vpon record,which I had rather ſeale
with my death,then repeate ouer to my ſhame:the lady is dead
vpon mine and my maſters falſe accuſation:and briefely,I de-
ſire nothing but the reward of a villaine.

Prince Runnes not this ſpeech like yron through your
bloud?

Claud. I haue dronke poiſon whiles he vtterd it.

Prince But did my brother ſet thee on to this?

Bor. Yea,and paid me richly for the practiſe of it.

Prince He is compoſde and framde of treacherie,
And fled he is vpon this villanie.

Clau. Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appeare
In the rare ſemblance that I lou'd it firſt.

Conſt. Come, bring away the plaintiffes, by this time our
ſexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter: and ma-
ſters, do not forget to ſpecifie when time and place ſhal ſerue,
that I am an aſſe.

Con.2 Here,here comes maſter Signior Leonato, and the
ſexton too.

Enter Leonato,his brother,and the Sexton.

Leonato Which is the villaine?let me ſee his eies,
That when I note another man like him,
I may auoide him:which of theſe is he?

Bor. If you would know your wronger,looke on me.

Leonato Art thou the ſlaue that with thy breath haſt killd
Mine innocent child?

Bor. Yea,euen I alone.

Leo. No,not ſo villaine,thou belieſt thy ſelfe,
Here ſtand a paire of honourable men,
A third is fled that had a hand in it:
I thanke you Princes for my daughters death,
Record it with your high and worthy deeds,
'Twas bravely done,if you bethinke you of it.

Clau. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I muſt ſpeake,chooſe your reuenge your ſelfe,

Impoſe

Impoſe me to what penance your inuention
Can lay vpon my ſinne, yet ſinnd I not,
But in miſtaking.
Prince By my ſoule nor I,
And yet to ſatisfie this good old man,
I would bend vnder any heauy waight,
That heele enioyne me to.
Leonato I cannot bid you bid my daughter liue,
That were impoſſible, but I pray you both,
Poſſeſſe the people in Meſſina here,
How innocent ſhe died, and if your loue
Can labour aught in ſad inuention,
Hang her an epitaph vpon her toomb,
And ſing it to her bones, ſing it to night:
To morrow morning come you to my houſe,
And ſince you could not be my ſon in law,
Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almoſt the copie of my child thats dead,
And ſhe alone is heyre to both of vs,
Giue her the right you ſhould haue giu'n her coſin,
And ſo dies my reuenge.
Claudio O noble ſir!
Your ouer kindneſſe doth wring teares from me,
I do embrace your offer and diſpoſe,
For henceforth of poore Claudio.
Leonato To morrow then I wil expect your comming,
To night I take my leaue, this naughty man
Shal face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who I beleeue was packt in al this wrong,
Hyred to it by your brother.
Bor. No by my ſoule ſhe was not,
Nor knew not what ſhe did when ſhe ſpoke to me,
But alwayes hath bin iuſt and vertuous,
In any thing that I do know by her.
Conſt. Moreouer ſir, which indeede is not vnder white and blacke, this plaintiffe heere, the offendour, did call me aſſe, I beſeech you let it be remembred in his puniſhment, and alſo

the

the watch heard them talke of one Deformed, they ſay he weares a key in his eare and a locke hanging by it, and borows monie in Gods name, the which he hath vſde ſo long, & neuer paied, that now men grow hard-hearted and wil lend nothing for Gods ſake: praie you examine him vpon that point.

Leonato I thanke thee for thy care and honeſt paines.

Conſt. Your worſhip ſpeakes like a moſt thankful and reuerent youth, and I praiſe God for you.

Leon. Theres for thy paines.

Conſt. God ſaue the foundation.

Leon. Goe, I diſcharge thee of thy priſoner, and I thanke thee.

Conſt. I leaue an arrant knaue with your worſhip, which I beſeech your worſhip to correct your ſelfe, for the example of others: God keepe your worſhip, I wiſh your worſhip well, God reſtore you to health, I humblie giue you leaue to depart and if a merie meeting may be wiſht, God prohibite it: come neighbour.

Leon. Vntill to morrow morning, Lords, farewell.

Brot. Farewell my lords, we looke for you to morrow.

Prince We will not faile.

Claud. To night ile mourne with Hero.

Leonato Bring you theſe fellowes on, weel talke with Margaret, how her acquaintance grew with this lewd felow. *exeunt*

Enter Benedicke and Margaret. V.ii.

Bened. Praie thee ſweete miſtris Margaret, deſerue well at my hands, by helping me to the ſpeech of Beatrice.

Mar. Wil you then write me a ſonnet in praiſe of my beauties?

Bene. In ſo high a ſtile Margaret, that no man liuing ſhall come ouer it, for in moſt comely truth thou deſerueſt it.

Mar. To haue no man come ouer me, why ſhal I alwaies keep below ſtaires.

Bene. Thy wit is as quicke as the grey-hounds mouth, it catches.

Mar. And your's, as blunt as the Fencers foiles, which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A moſt manly witte Margaret, it will not hurt a woman: and ſo I pray thee call Beatrice, I giue thee the bucklers.

Marg. Giue vs the ſwordes, wee haue bucklers of our owne.

Bene. If you vſe them Margaret, you muſt putte in the pikes with a vice, and they are daungerous weapons for maides.

Mar. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I thinke hath legges. *Exit Margarite.*

Bene. And therefore wil come. The God of loue that ſits aboue, and knowes mee, and knowes me, how pittifull I deſerue. I meane in ſinging, but in louing, Leander the good ſwimmer, Troilus the firſt imploier of pandars, and a whole booke full of theſe quondam carpet-mongers, whoſe names yet runne ſmoothly in the euen rode of a blancke verſe, why they were neuer ſo truly turnd ouer and ouer as my poore ſelfe in loue: mary I cannot ſhew it in rime, I haue tried, I can finde out no rime to Ladie but babie, an innocent rime: for ſcorne, horne, a hard rime: for ſchoole foole, a babling rime: very ominous endings, no, I was not borne vnder a riming plannet, nor I cannot wooe in feſtiuall termes: ſweete Beatrice wouldſt thou come when I cald thee?

Enter Beatrice.

Beat. Yea ſignior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O ſtay but till then.

Beat. Then, is ſpoken: fare you wel now, and yet ere I goe, let me goe with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath paſt betweene you and Claudio.

Bene. Onely foule words, and therevpon I will kiſſe thee.

Beat. Foule words is but foule wind, and foule wind is but foule breath, and foule breath is noiſome, therfore I wil depart vnkiſt.

Bene. Thou haſt frighted the word out of his right ſence, ſo forcible is thy wit, but I muſt tel thee plainly, Claudio vndergoes my challenge, and either I muſt ſhortly heare from him, or I will ſubſcribe him a coward, and I pray thee now tell me, for

2 Lines above

for which of my bad parts didſt thou firſt fal in loue with me?

Beat. For them all together, which maintaind ſo politique a ſtate of euil, that they will not admitte any good part to intermingle with them: but for which of my good parts did you firſt ſuffer loue for me?

Bene. Suffer loue! a good epithite, I do ſuffer loue indeed, for I loue thee againſt my will.

Beat. In ſpight of your heart I thinke, alas poore heart, if you ſpight it for my ſake, I will ſpight it for yours, for I wil neuer loue that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wiſe to wooe peaceably.

Beat. It appeares not in this confeſſion, there's not one wiſe man among twentie that will praiſe himſelfe.

Bene. An old, an old inſtance Beatrice, that liu'd in the time of good neighbours, if a man do not erect in this age his owne toomb ere he dies, he ſhall liue no longer in monument, then the bell rings, and the widow weepes.

Beat. And how long is that thinke you?

Bene. Queſtion, why an hower in clamour and a quarter in rhewme, therefore is it moſt expedient for the wiſe, if Don worme (his conſcience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his owne vertues, as I am to my ſelf ſo much for praiſing my ſelfe, who I my ſelfe will beare witnes is praiſe worthie, and now tell me, how doth your coſin?

Beat. Verie ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Verie ill too.

Bene. Serue God, loue me, and mend, there wil I leaue you too, for here comes one in haſte. *Enter Vrſula.*

Vrſula Madam, you muſt come to your vncle, yonders old coile at home, it is prooued my Lady Hero hath bin falſely accuſde, the Prince and Claudio mightily abuſde, and Don Iohn is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come preſently?

Beat. Will you go heare this newes ſignior?

Bene. I wil liue in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eies: and moreouer, I wil go with thee to thy vncles. *exit.*

V.iii. # Much adoe

Enter Claudio, Prince, and three or foure with tapers.

Claudio Is this the monument of Leonato?

Lord It is my Lord. *Epitaph.*

Done to death by ſlauderous tongues,
Was the Hero that heere lies:
Death in guerdon of her wronges,
Giues her fame which neuer dies:
So the life that dyed with ſhame,
Liues in death with glorious fame.
Hang thou there vpon the toomb,
Praiſing hir when I am dead.

Claudio Now muſick ſound & ſing your ſolemne hymne.

Song Pardon goddeſſe of the night,
Thoſe that ſlew thy virgin knight,
For the which with ſongs of woe,
Round about her tombe they goe:
Midnight aſſiſt our mone, help vs to ſigh & grone.
Heauily heauily.
Graues yawne and yeeld your dead,
Till death be vttered,
Heauily heauily.

Lo. Now vnto thy bones good night, yeerely will I do this (right.

Prince Good morrow maiſters, put your torches out,
The wolues haue preied, and looke, the gentle day
Before the wheeles of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowſie Eaſt with ſpots of grey:
Thanks to you al, and leaue vs, fare you well.

Claudio Good morrow maſters, each his ſeuerall way.

Prince Come let vs hence, and put on other weedes,
And then to Leonatoes we will goe.

Claudio And Hymen now with luckier iſſue ſpeeds,
Then this for whom we rendred vp this woe. *exeunt.*

V.iv. *Enter Leonato, Benedick, Margaret Vrſula, old man, Frier, Hero.*

Frier Did I not tell you ſhee was innocent?

Leo. So are the Prince and Claudio who accuſd her,
Vpon the errour that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in ſome fault for this,
Although againſt her will as it appeares,

In

In the true course of all the question.
Old Wel, I am glad that all things sorts so well.
Bened. And so am I, being else by faith enforst
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.
Leo. Well daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by your selues,
And when I send for you come hither masked:
The Prince and Claudio promisde by this howre
To visite me, you know your office brother,
You must be father to your brothers daughter,
And giue her to young Claudio. *Exeunt Ladies.*
Old Which I will doe with confirmd countenance.
Bened. Frier, I must intreate your paines, I thinke.
Frier To doe what Signior?
Bened. To bind me, or vndo me, one of them:
Signior Leonato, truth it is good Signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of fauour.
Leo. That eye my daughter lent her, tis most true.
Bened. And I do with an eye of loue requite her.
Leo. The sight whereof I thinke you had from me,
From Claudio and the Prince, but whats your will?
Bened. Your answere sir is enigmaticall,
But for my wil, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conioynd,
In the state of honorable marriage,
In which (good Frier) I shal desire your help.
Leo. My heart is with your liking.
Frier And my helpe.
Heere comes the Prince and Claudio.
Enter Prince, and Claudio, and two or three other.
Prince Good morrow to this faire assembly.
Leo. Good morrow Prince, good morrow Claudio:
We heere attend you, are you yet determined,
To day to marry with my brothers daughter?
Claud. Ile hold my mind were she an Ethiope.
Leo Call her foorth brother, heres the Frier ready.
P. Good morrow Bened, why whats the matter?

That you haue ſuch a Februarie face,
So full of froſt, of ſtorme, and cloudineſſe.
Claud. I thinke he thinkes vpon the ſauage bull:
Tuſh feare not man, weele tip thy hornes with gold,
And all Europa ſhall reioyce at thee,
As once Europa did at luſtie Ioue,
When he would play the noble beaſt in loue.
Bene. Bull Ioue ſir had an amiable lowe,
And ſome ſuch ſtrange bull leapt your fathers cowe,
And got a calfe in that ſame noble feate,
Much like to you, for you haue iuſt his bleate.

Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Margaret, Vrſula.

Clau. For this I owe you: here comes other recknings.
Which is the Lady I muſt ſeize vpon?
Leo. This ſame is ſhe, and I do giue you her.
Claud. Why then ſhees mine, ſweet, let me ſee your face.
Leon. No that you ſhall not till you take her hand,
Before this Frier, and ſweare to marry hir.
Claud. Giue me your hand before this holy Frier,
I am your husband if you like of me.
Hero And when I liu'd I was your other wife,
And when you loued, you were my other husband.
Claud. Another Hero.
Hero Nothing certainer.
One Hero died defilde, but I do liue,
And ſurely as I liue, I am a maide.
Prince The former Hero, Hero that is dead.
Leon. She died my Lord, but whiles her ſlaunder liu'd.
Frier All this amazement can I qualifie,
When after that the holy rites are ended,
Ile tell you largely of faire Heroes death,
Meane time let wonder ſeeme familiar,
And to the chappell let vs preſently.
Ben. Soft and faire Frier, which is Beatrice?
Beat. I anſwer to that name, what is your will?
Bene. Do not you loue me?
Beat. Why no, no more then reaſon.

Bene.

Bene. Why then your vncle, and the prince, and Claudio.
Haue beene deceiued, they ſwore you did.
Beat. Do not you loue me?
Bene. Troth no, no more then reaſon.
Beat. Why then my coſin Margaret and Vrſula
Are much deceiu'd, for they did ſweare you did.
Bene. They ſwore that you were almoſt ſicke for me.
Beat. They ſwore that you were welnigh dead for me.
Bene. Tis no ſuch matter, then you do not loue me.
Beat. No truly, but in friendly recompence.
Leon. Come coſin, I am ſure you loue the gentleman.
Clau. And ile beſworne vpon't, that he loues her,
For heres a paper written in his hand,
A halting ſonnet of his owne pure braine,
Faſhioned to Beatrice.
Hero And heres another,
Writ in my coſins hand, ſtolne from her pocket,
Containing her affection vnto Benedicke.
Bene. A miracle, heres our owne hands againſt our hearts:
come, I will haue thee, but by this light I take thee for pittie.
Beat. I would not denie you, but by this good day, I yeeld
vpon great perſwaſion, and partly to ſaue your life, for I was
told, you were in a conſumption.
Leon. Peace I will ſtop your mouth,
Prince How doſt thou Benedicke the married man?
Bene. Ile tel thee what prince: a colledge of witte-crackers
cannot flout me out of my humour, doſt thou think I care for
a Satyre or an Epigramme? no, if a man will be beaten with
braines, a ſhall weare nothing hanſome about him: in briefe,
ſince I doe purpoſe to marrie, I will think nothing to anie pur-
poſe that the world can ſaie againſt it, and therfore neuer flout
at me, for what I haue ſaid againſt it: for man is a giddie thing,
and this is my concluſion: for thy part Claudio, I did thinke
to haue beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinſman,
liue vnbruiſde, and loue my couſen.
Clau. I had wel hopte thou wouldſt haue denied Beatrice,
that I might haue cudgelld thee out of thy ſingle life, to make
thee

thee a double dealer, which out of queſtion thou wilt be, if my
cooſin do not looke exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends, lets haue a dance ere we
are maried, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wiues
heeles.

Leon. Weele haue dancing afterward.

Bene. Firſt, of my worde, therefore plaie muſicke, Prince,
thou art ſad, get thee a wife, get thee a wife, there is no ſtaffe
more reuerent then one tipt with horne.

Enter Meſſenger.

Meſſ. My Lord, your brother Iohn is tane in flight,
And brought with armed men backe to Meſſina.

Bene. Thinke not on him till to morrow, ile deuiſe thee
braue puniſhments for him: ſtrike vp Pipers. *dance.*

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